

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICERS: THEIR MENTORING RELATIONSHIPS

A Dissertation

by

MANDA HAYS ROSSER

Submitted to the Office of Graduate Studies of  
Texas A&M University  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of  
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

December 2004

Major Subject: Educational Human Resource Development

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## ABSTRACT

Chief Executive Officers: Their Mentoring Relationships.

(December 2004)

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The majority of mentoring research has explored mentoring from the vantage point of protégé perceptions, reactions, experiences, and development (Wanberg et al. 2003; Kram, 1988). Participants in mentoring studies have commonly been employees, college students, or mid-level managers. Little is known regarding the impact of mentoring roles in relation to top executives who are, over the span of their careers, likely to participate in developmental relationships as both mentor and protégé. In fact, accessing people who are active CEOs has been extremely problematic for a majority of interested researchers (Thomas, 1995). Limited research on mentoring and especially that on CEOs is used to inform the current Human Resource Development (HRD) scholarship and practice. The current study will inform HRD and provide insight into how mentoring relationships can be used to develop individuals in organizations.

Key findings from this study were reported from a qualitative study (Moustakas, 1994) involving twelve CEOs of large for-profit US corporations who detailed their experiences as both mentors and protégés. Emerging themes from the larger study

overlap, in part, with key mentoring functions as identified by Kram (1988). In addition to reinforcing and informing the work of Kram (1988), key CEOs provided insight regarding their experiences in long-term (several years or more) mentoring relationships. The combined themes resulted in a framework demonstrating the development of mentoring relationships.

In addition to a general discussion of a mentoring framework, I focused the study primarily on CEO perceptions regarding the impact of their mentoring related experiences on 1) how their mentors have impacted their development; 2) how they mentor others; and 3) the relational elements in mentoring relationships. Because a rarely assessed population was studied, scholars and practitioners in HRD will gain a unique understanding and greater insight into how mentoring relationships develop professionals, particularly CEOs.

## DEDICATION

To Wynn

my support and encourager, my confidante and friend, my love for life

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

It is hard for me to begin to thank the numerous people who helped me through writing this dissertation. The individuals who would ask, “How are things coming with the research?” You always inquired out of love – so many of you encouraged me through the entire process. Thank you for your sincere support.

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

Have you ever had a role model—someone who provided counsel, protected you from the pitfalls, and ensured you were in the right place at the right time? Have you ever had that person who accepted you for who you are and yet knew who you could become and challenged you to be your best? I have! Did you understand what was occurring in that special relationship? I didn't, and that is why I engaged in this study. It amazes me to think of the factors that have influenced my life. The most important factors are the people that have helped to guide me in becoming who I am today—my mentors.

Fortunately, I am not the only one who has had a mentor. Jennings (1971) believes, "Most corporate presidents have had mentors who were vital to their success." Howard, a CEO for an international real estate firm stated, "Mentoring is about giving, giving of yourself. There is no expectation of return. In mentoring, there is a love of the process of mentoring and a love of the person. You have to love the process of mentoring and seeing people grow and develop, and then also you have to love the person." Ben, the CEO of an international construction company, also provided insight, "Mentoring is much like the relationship between a parent and a child. It [the investment in someone] will never be returned to you, but one can only hope that it is passed on."

Because of the significance of mentoring relationships to my development, I wanted to understand the mentoring experiences of others. Through my understanding, I

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The style and format for this dissertation will follow that of *Human Resource Development Quarterly*.

hoped to explain what takes place in mentoring relationships. Outcomes provided by mentoring relationships are being discovered, but no one has explained the dynamic of the relationships that makes them special—that which makes the relationships work. By studying the experiences of individuals at the top of organizations, I intended to have a better understanding of mentoring relationships and especially what has been described as the “magical” or “mystical” (Bennetts, 2002, p. 156) interaction that can occur between two individuals . I believe this study has brought me closer to that understanding.

#### Nature of the Study

It is estimated that more than one third of large U.S. companies have a formal mentoring program (Bragg, 1989; Porter, 2001). Available research suggested that employees supported by a mentoring relationship received more promotions (Scandura, 1992), earned higher incomes (Chao, Walz, & Gardner, 1992), and gained higher career satisfaction (Fagenson, 1989). Mentoring has been reported as a powerful career development intervention that assisted employees in the establishment and advancement of their careers. Mentors have been typically described as individuals with advanced experience and knowledge who are committed to providing upward support and mobility to their protégés (those individuals paired with mentors) (Ragins & Cotton, 1999). By providing support, guidance, and confidential counsel, mentors are often credited with developing young professionals.

Research on mentoring and the effects of mentoring relationships has been conducted for a relatively short period of time (Ragins & Cotton, 1999; Wanberg,

Welsh, & Hezlett, 2003). Most of the mentoring research identified has been published within the last fifteen years. In addition to published research on mentoring, the majority of popular mentoring literature has focused on how to develop mentoring programs, how to be a good mentor, and how to give advice to protégés. Literature featuring systematic examination of the impact or effectiveness of mentoring is limited (Wanberg et al., 2003).

### *Background*

According to *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary* (1993), mentor is defined as “a trusted counselor or guide” (p. 726). Words associated with the root word mentor include mentorship, mentoring, and mentee. The terms protégé or mentee are typically used to describe the individual receiving attention from the mentor. For the purpose of this study, the term protégé was used.

“Mentoring is a protected relationship in which learning and experimentation can occur, potential skills can be developed, and in which results can be measured in terms of competence gained rather than curricular territory covered” (Gibbons, 2000, p. 18). Mentoring is used by “individuals to acquire skills, open doors, increase confidence, widen perspectives, avoid many errors, and otherwise enhance their careers and lives” (Phillips-Jones, 1997, p. 9). Professional development and personal development are critical components of mentoring relationships. Mentoring focuses on the developmental needs of the protégé at a specific and personal level. Mentoring relationships that are situated in work or work-related contexts is the focus of the majority of current literature.

### *History*

In Western society, there is consistent agreement in the literature regarding the origin of mentoring relationships. “Mentoring is one of the oldest forms of human development” (Shea, 1994, p. 13). In ancient Greece, it was common for young male citizens to be paired with older male members of the community. These pairings were based on the belief that each boy would learn and emulate the values of his mentor (Murray, 2001). According to Murray (2001), “The Greeks premised these relationships on a basic principle of human survival: Humans learn skills, culture, and values directly from other humans whom they look up to or admire” (p. 7).

In Greek mythology, Homer, in the pages of the *The Odyssey*, assigned the name Mentor to the caring, trusted friend, and guide that helped develop Odysseus’s son. In time, the term mentor began to refer to a person who served as a guide, teacher, advisor, or helper to another (Shea, 1994). In the context of 21<sup>st</sup> Century organizations, mentors continue to provide insight into many areas of others’ (protégés’) lives, which will be discussed next in terms of functions—psychosocial and career development.

### *Functions of Mentoring*

A review of related literature indicated that mentoring relationships serve several functions and occur in different contexts. “Mentoring is the most intense and powerful one-on-one developmental relationship, entailing the most influence, identification, and emotional involvement” (Wanberg et al., 2003, p. 41). The use of mentoring relationships as a developmental tool is rapidly increasing in organizations (Noe, Greenberger, & Wang, 2002; Porter, 2001). Mentoring relationships typically occur in



two formats: formal relationships and informal relationships, and even these two types of mentoring can vary greatly. The informal relationship occurs spontaneously and is voluntary. Structures of informal mentoring relationships are flexible and loosely defined (Murray, 2001). The mentoring pair is usually mutually identified and can become more intimate and close (Ragins, Cotton, & Miller, 2000). Formal mentoring relationships are assigned by a third party and are implemented by the organization. The structure can vary from continual scheduled interaction to an unplanned interaction during the workday (Ragins & Cotton, 1999).

Mentoring functions are the essential characteristics that differentiate developmental relationships from other relationships (Kram, 1988). Kram's two broad categories of mentoring are career development and psychosocial functions. Many researchers relied on Kram's seminal work for the framing and operationalization of their studies (Allen, Russell, & Maetzel, 1997; Ragins, 1997; Ragins & Cotton, 1999; Wanberg et al., 2003). Mentoring functions define the parameters for the development an individual is likely to receive from his or her mentor.

The career development function involves coaching, sponsorship, providing challenging assignments, protecting protégés from adverse forces, and fostering positive visibility (Ragins, 1997). The career development function is directly related to the knowledge and position of the mentor. The roles within the career development function serve to aid in advancing in an organization (Kram, 1988). Protégés and mentors alike may gain from the career development function and the roles within the function.

The psychosocial function is the aspect of development often experienced by protégés that enhance their sense of competence, help them to develop a sense of identity, and promote their effectiveness in a professional role (Kram, 1988). From the perspective of mentor-protégé exchange, these functions commonly involve role modeling, acceptance and confirmation, counseling, and friendship. The psychosocial function typically provides the protégés a higher level of self-worth.

In the most effective mentoring relationships, personal development is enabled by the emergence and strengthening of interpersonal connections between the mentor and protégé that foster mutual trust and increase intimacy (Kram, 1983). Mullen (1998) found mentoring relationships characterized by intimacy and an interpersonal bond provide both the psychosocial and career development functions. Because of the depth of the relationship, mentoring relationships are more critical to development, and unique to the mentoring relationship.

### Statement of Problem

A majority of the current mentoring literature focuses on the impact of mentoring on work and career-related outcomes (Wanberg et al., 2003). The focus of most research studies is on protégé outcomes, some on the outcomes for the mentor, and even fewer on the outcomes for the organization. Wanberg et al. (2003) identified more than ninety studies whose authors examined outcomes for the protégé. A vast majority of the results supported the notion that protégés receive positive benefits from mentoring relationships. Many of the studies were a comparison of individuals who had mentors to those who had none. Individuals with mentors had more “positive subjective outcomes

including higher expectations for advancement, career satisfaction, job satisfaction, career commitment, and intentions to stay at their organizations. Individuals with mentors also had higher levels of compensation and promotions” as compared to individuals without mentors (Wanberg et al., 2003, p. 47).

Wanberg et al. (2003) identified six studies that focused on the outcomes of mentoring relationships for the mentor. There is evidence that mentors receive benefits from being in a mentoring relationship; some benefits are intrinsic and some extrinsic. Individuals who mentored often had a strong support system, increased job performance, increased power base, and recognition for developing others (Allen, Poteet, and Burroughs, 1997; Zey, 1984).

The research on mentoring relationships is relatively new. Studies mentioned previously provide a foundation for understanding mentoring relationships. However, there are still areas to explore, much like the gap in the research pertaining to the role of mentoring in executive development, creating a lack of evidence that mentoring is a developmental tool for chief executive officers (CEOs). I have been unable to identify any research associated with CEOs’ experiences as both a mentor and a protégé. Perhaps the lack of research is because CEOs are viewed as inaccessible as described in *Studying Elites Using Qualitative Methods* (Hertz & Imber, 1995) which warns against studying executives. “Unlike other segments of the social and economic elite, top corporate executives tend to be relatively easy to identify and even to locate. Unfortunately, visibility is not the same as accessibility” (Thomas, 1995, p. 4).

Although limited, Wanberg et al. (2003) identified four studies that examined executives and outcomes provided to them only as protégés and one study that examined benefits to executives only as mentors. The research on how mentors and protégés interact is limited. According to Wanberg et al. (2003), “A handful of studies have illustrated the complexity of mentor-protégé interactions, highlighting a number of ways in which protégés and mentors influence each others’ perceptions, affect, and behaviors” (p. 80). The purpose of the current study was to better understand mentoring relationships through the experiences of the CEO as both mentor and protégé. The purpose was fulfilled by answering two basic research questions.

- What are, or have been, the experiences of CEOs as protégés?
- What are, or have been, the experiences of CEOs as mentors?

### Methodology

I chose to view the interactions with the CEOs from a qualitative perspective, which allowed me to understand the CEOs’ experiences through my eyes and for the CEOs to tell me their stories from their point of view. Qualitative research is an effort to understand the uniqueness of individual situations as part of particular contexts explored through the experiences of research participants (Merriam, 1998). The primary intent of this study was to understand the experience of the CEO as both mentor and protégé. Sherman and Webb (1988) stated that qualitative research “implies a direct concern with experience as it is ‘lived’ or ‘felt’ or ‘undergone’ ” (p. 39). Qualitative research assumes that meaning is embedded in people’s experiences and that meaning is mediated through the investigator’s own perceptions (Merriam, 1998).

### *Participants*

In order for me to gain the information necessary for the study, I used purposive sampling. Purposive sampling allowed me to choose those participants who have the expertise in the area being studied. Following interviews with fifteen individuals, twelve of the CEOs selected for the study are from organizations with more than 500 employees, the other three CEOs are from smaller organizations. Although, I tried to identify and contact a diverse representation of CEOs, it was difficult. The number of white, male CEOs is overwhelming, thus all the participants for this study were male and Caucasian which accurately represents a vast majority of the current CEO population.

### *Data Collection Methods*

The data were collected using the qualitative method of interviewing. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with each participant. The aim of the interview was to collect data related to influential relationships in CEOs' lives and understand the type of influence provided (i.e. the function of the relationship). The interviews as described by Erlandson, Harris, Skipper, and Allen, (1993) were more of a dialogue or interaction. Throughout the interviews, I observed the personal characteristics of the CEOs, their interactions with the organizational environment, and their interactions with me, which helped to inform my understanding of the CEOs and their experiences. Each CEO was asked to review and sign an informed consent form explaining their rights as a human subject in this study.

The second phase included member checks in order to clarify and confirm the data shared by the CEOs. Member checks were used to verify that the data gathered was

what the participants intended (Erlandson et al., 1993). The realities that I constructed from the interviews are designed to provide thick description essential for the transferability of the findings (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

### *Analysis*

In the collection and analysis of data, Erlandson et al. (1993) determined, “it can be hard to distinguish between when the collecting ends and when the analysis begins, for gathering and analysis are complimentary, ongoing, and often simultaneous processes” (p. 38). As described by Glaser and Strauss (1967) and adopted by Lincoln and Guba (1985), the constant comparative method was used in developing the construct of the reality of the study. The constant comparative method is widely used in all kinds of qualitative research (Merriam, 1998). In qualitative research, the analysis of the data gathered begins the first moment of interaction with participants. The collection and analysis of obtained data coincides with the immersion of themes during the study (Erlandson et al., 1993). The ultimate product of the analysis articulates the essence of the CEO’s experience as a mentor and a protégé.

### *Procedures Used*

A sample of fifteen participants were asked to take part in an interview at locations selected by the participants. The interviews were, on average, one and one half hours in duration. The interview process consisted of primarily open-ended questions and was semi-structured. The interviews were tape recorded and then transcribed. Transcripts were provided to the participants for review and validation. Individuals had access only to their own individual interviews. Standard practices regarding the

maintenance of participants' confidentiality and anonymity were utilized (Merriam, 1998).

Follow-up interviews were conducted with three key informants. The interviews were fifteen to twenty minutes and took place over the phone. The primary intent of the second interview was to better understand the CEOs' experiences with their primary mentors and what made the relationships so special. I took notes and continued the process in maintaining their confidentiality.

### Significance of the Study

This study was conducted not only in an effort to better understand the development of CEOs, but also to inform human resource development (HRD) practice and research. It is important to understand the interaction of mentoring relationships and HRD. The HRD faculty at Texas A&M University has defined human resource development as "the process of improving learning and performance in individual, group, and organization contexts through domains of expertise such as lifelong learning, career development, training and development, and organization development" (Texas A&M University, 2002). The relationship between mentoring and HRD can be found in the functions of mentoring and how they link to the three realms of HRD.

Managers have used mentoring to help their employees "unlock the mysteries of the organization, while directing them through the perils and pitfalls of organizational life" (Cummings & Worley, 2001, p. 119). Employees who are committed to and understand an organization will perform at a higher level; mentoring helps employees develop this type of commitment (Wanberg et al., 2003). It is important to mention

Hegstad (2002) who concluded that companies receive improved performance, increased motivation, and lower turnover as benefits of mentoring relationships. In addition, Egan and Rosser (2004) discovered female protégés involved in facilitated-mentoring relationships increased organization commitment, improved job satisfaction, and increased performance.

Many positive outcomes for mentoring have been identified. What can be added to help benefit HRD? First, this study gives both organizations and HRD professionals a better understanding of the nature of mentoring from the perspective of the CEO. CEOs are generally perceived to be successful. By understanding how mentoring influences CEOs, the findings of the study could be effective in influencing approaches to CEO development. In addition, HRD professionals will understand how to utilize mentoring to help in developing the lives of other professionals. By understanding this perspective, HRD practitioners can better utilize mentoring for the development of promising employees. Next, the study contributes to the body of knowledge on mentoring relationships. The results of this study will be used to inform the HRD literature and provide practitioners an additional insight regarding the development of individuals in workplace contexts. Last, by studying others' experiences with mentoring, I have an increased understanding of the process of mentoring and can use this knowledge to make a positive difference in others' lives by being a mentor.

### Framing the Study

What kind of people impact CEOs of Fortune 500 companies or other large organizations? It was people who saw potential and cared enough to help these young



men realize what could be accomplished. At the same time, when asked about mentoring young professionals, these men, with obvious influence, “hoped” to somehow make a difference in the lives of others. I perceive CEOs as successful and having done things right. I wanted to break the barrier that often exists between those at the top and the rest of the world and find out who helped those at the top to get there. Furthermore, I wanted to see how CEOs mentor other young professionals and to determine if there was a link between the CEOs experiences as a protégés and their perspective of human resource development. I explored the idea that CEOs’ experiences as mentors and protégés might lead to an understanding of how mentoring relationships provide development for professionals.

Because the experiences of the CEOs were interpreted by me, I attempted to understand the lens through which I saw the CEOs and their experiences. There are several assumptions to be recognized, the first of which is the power that CEOs have obtained. With power comes influence and the ability to impact others. I also assumed that CEOs have had mentors in their lives and have acted as a mentor to others. Another assumption was CEOs’ lives are complex in nature and that being able to reach the root of their experiences might be difficult. In addition, time constraints and the intimate nature of the questions could create barriers for my research. In describing the challenge of studying CEOs, Thomas (1995) explained the value of a CEOs’ time is seen in the amenities that allow them to do their job, chauffeured limousines, jets, and tightly controlled schedules. Further, Thomas described how most meetings with executives

will only last half the time expected and will probably be interrupted by some emergency or something more important.

The assumptions helped me organize and prepare to utilize the time available in order to be respectful to the CEO. The actual research went much smoother than I could have imagined, and I had few of the problems described by Thomas (1995) and Useem (1995). Although several interviews were interrupted by phone calls and messages, the CEOs always returned to our conversations. Many gave me more than an hour, and one even gave me two hours. In addition, during member check over half of the CEOs responded by e-mail within three days to confirm the data being used in the study. During the follow up interviews with key informants, all three being interviewed were able to be reached by phone within one day. The stories the CEOs disclosed during our conversations were intimate and showed emotion that helped me understand and see a more holistic picture of the CEOs' experiences. The accessibility I had to the CEOs and the ways in which most of them approached our conversation showed sincerity and an openness that was surprising, particularly given the literature supporting the contrary.

The study consisted of one round of interviews with fifteen CEOs, and follow up interviews with three primary informants. The CEOs were male, Caucasian, and 40-65 years of age, which is similar to the overall population of the CEOs in the United States. The CEOs run large organizations in a variety of fields, were all educated with at least a bachelor degree, and had familial support of their professional interest. All the CEOs were married, and most had children.

### *Limitations*

There are many potential limitations involved in interviewing CEOs. In a book exploring the challenges associated with studying CEOs and the “business elites,” Thomas (1995) stated, “The difficulties associated with getting access and data ought to serve as a caution to the aspiring student of business elites: You have to have a reason for going to all the trouble” (p. 6). I am glad I did not heed the warning provided by Thomas, because my experience with the CEOs was quite different than he described. The potential limitations identified by Thomas included accessibility and time constraints. As well, having honest and open dialogue with the CEOs and reaching the level of detail needed to understand the full experiences of the CEOs were concerns.

Being aware of the potential limitations, I took extra caution in making sure I was prepared and aware of the time allotted for the interviews. If anything, I created my own limitations by ensuring the CEOs were aware of the time and that I did not intrude on their other commitments. The CEOs, on the other hand, were not as concerned with our time extending beyond the appointment and were more concerned with making sure I got the information needed to complete the study. I felt the actual experiences with the CEOs were positive, which contradicts previous research on CEOs willingness to be involved in research. Their willingness to share both time and information with me was tremendous.

The study was further limited by the CEOs and their experiences. I could only report the occurrences shared by the CEOs and what I understood from those occurrences. Additionally, the study was limited by the interactions I had with the CEOs

and my ability to get to the essential stories of their experiences as mentors and protégés in a defined amount of time. Although I did receive adequate time with the CEOs, more time could have provided even deeper sharing and more insight into the experiences. The stories told were also limited by the CEO's ability to describe his experience and verbalize the quality of the experience.

### Assumptions

The following assumptions were made regarding the study and my approach to the study:

- CEOs have had or do have mentors in their lives.
- CEOs have had or do have protégés in their lives.
- CEOs are generally considered to be successful in current Western culture.
- Our lives, including those of interviewees for this study, are constructed of multiple realities.
- Human experiences can be catalogued and described in order to learn how we obtain meaning from our experiences.
- Mentoring relationships are complex in nature.
- The attempts made at conveying human experiences are partial, subjective, and highly contextual.

### Operational Definitions

*Chief Executive Officer (CEO)* – The lead person in an organization charged with managing the operations of the organization (United States Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2003).

*Human Resource Development (HRD)* – The process of improving learning and performance in individual, group, and organization contexts through domains of expertise such as lifelong learning, career development, training and development, and organization development (Texas A&M University, 2002).

*Large Organization* – For this study, large organization refers to a company consisting of more than 500 employees (The Commonwealth Fund, New York, 2003).

*Mentor* – The more experienced person in a mentoring relationship (Kram, 1988).

*Mentoring* – A one-on-one relationship between a less experienced and a more experienced person that is prototypically intended to advance the personal and professional growth of the less experienced individual (Mullen, 1998).

*Protégé* – The less experienced person in a mentoring relationship (Ragins & Cotton, 1999).

### Contents of Dissertation

This dissertation consists of five chapters. In Chapter I, an introduction and overview for the study is provided. In Chapter II, I review the history of mentoring and identify theories of human development and interaction that ground the literature on mentoring relationships. Furthermore, a review of the literature on the outcomes of mentoring relationships, executive development, and HRD is found in Chapter II. In Chapter III, the methods for collecting and analyzing the interview data are described. In Chapter IV, I examine CEOs' experiences as a protégé and a mentor. In the first part of Chapter IV, I explain the connection found between Kram's (1988) two mentoring

functions and the roles of the CEOs' mentors. In addition, I explore the core of the mentoring relationships and the relational elements that thread through each experience. In the second half of Chapter IV, I describe the process of analysis of the CEOs' experiences as mentors. I provide conclusions from the study and recommendations for future research and practice in Chapter V.

## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Many people have a significant person in their lives who “has been a long-term and positive influence on their development” (Gibbons, 2000, p.19). Gibbons (2000) defined mentors as “influential people who significantly help you reach your major life goals” (p. 18). Both individuals and organizations use mentoring relationships to enhance learning and professional and personal development in the workplace (Wanberg et al., 2003).

#### Introduction

In this chapter, I introduce mentoring and provide a historical perspective of the development of the mentoring literature. Next, I discuss what mentoring is and describe types and functions of mentoring relationships. Human resource development (HRD) is then introduced, and its connection to mentoring is described. Although there is limited research available, I find it important to provide a brief discussion on mentoring and executive development. The final section of the review of literature is a comprehensive look at the outcomes of mentoring relationships starting with outcomes for the protégé, followed by outcomes for the mentor, and finally, outcomes for the organization.

Much of the available research on mentoring tends to be prescriptive (Rosser & Egan, 2003). Such literature provides guidance for setting up formal mentoring programs rather than research-based explanations or suggestions for the effective and efficient facilitation of mentoring relationships or examinations of factors that impact outcomes (Gibb, 1999). The research on mentoring is limited. Many of these guides make

unsupported claims regarding positive results from mentoring relationships. (Wanberg et al., 2003).

Swap, Leonard, Shields, and Abrams (2001) suggested mentoring as an effective way to transfer organization and job specific knowledge in the workplace. The authors suggested that the majority of knowledge transfer is associated with management development rather than technical knowledge. Organization-specific knowledge is transferred informally through the mentoring relationship. Mentors also transfer knowledge regarding norms and appropriate behaviors within the organization context. This knowledge transfer increases the likelihood that the protégé is incorporated into the culture of the organization (Swap, Leonard, Shields, & Abrams, 2001).

Linking mentoring to HRD could improve upon individuals' learning in organizations. The learning paradigm within HRD can be defined as "...the field of study and practice responsible for the fostering of a long-term work related learning capacity at an individual, group, and organizational level of organizations" (Marsick & Watkins, 1994, p. 357). In addition, Marsick and Watkins stated "HRD works to enhance individual's capacity to learn, to help groups overcome barriers to learning, and to help organizations create a culture, which promotes conscious learning" (p. 355).

#### A Historical Overview

The word "mentor" was first used in Greek mythology during Homer's epic, *The Odyssey* (Kram, 1985; Aldisert, 2001; Murray, 2001). The tale begins around 1200 B.C. with the adventurer, Odysseus, leaving his family to go to war. Before departing, Odysseus appointed a guardian to his family and household affairs named Mentor. For



10 years, Mentor acted as teacher, advisor, friend, and protector to Odysseus's son Telemachus. The story details the importance of the relationship between Mentor and Telemachus and the significance of the developmental relationship. The term mentoring emerged from the effort to describe, and hold as a model, the ideal role Mentor was reported to have played in the development of his protégé (Aldisert, 2001). The Greeks believed these relationships were necessary for human survival. As stated by Murray (2001), "Humans learn skills, culture, and values directly from others whom they admire" (p. 7).

Archaeologists and anthropologists trace the origin of mentoring back to the Stone Age, when talented healers, cave artists, and shamans instructed younger people in the arts and knowledge needed to perpetuate their skills (Shea, 1994). A similar relationship can be seen during the Middle Ages with craft guilds. Young boys were traditionally apprenticed to a master; a person who had developed an excellent trade (Murray, 2001). The young boy would live with the master and work his way up to become a journeyman through the guidance and tutelage of the master. The master could be seen as fulfilling the role of a mentor to the young boy. Within time, the journeyman would become a master and often take over the profession for the older master. Through this form of mentoring, the mentor would pass down valuable social and political knowledge, as well as skills with which to earn a living.

Although mentoring relationships were utilized throughout history, no mention of mentoring is found in the social science literature until the late 1970s (Wanberg et al., 2003). Kanter's (1977) work reintroduced the role mentoring plays in the corporate

world. In *The Men and Women of the Corporation*, Kanter (1977) discussed the benefits of mentoring and also the difficulty certain groups, such as women and minorities, had in reaping the benefits of corporate life. Not long after Kanter's work, *The Season of a Man's Life* was written by Levinson, Darrow, Klein, Levinson, and McKee (1978), which described the mentoring relationship as "...one of the most complex, and developmentally important, a man can have in early adulthood" (p. 97). Levinson et al., (1978) discussed how mentors serve as a support to young adults in helping them transition and realize their dreams. The authors also determined that mentoring relationships are often situated in a work setting and are formal in nature. However, the relationship "...may also evolve informally,...mentoring is defined not in terms of formal roles but in terms of the character of the relationship and the functions it serves" (p. 98).

Kanter (1977) and Levinson et al. (1978) referred to men throughout their work. The use of male terminology in both Kanter's and Levinson's et al. work reflect the nature of the times. Men were more prevalent in the workforce, particularly in upper management in the late 1970s. During the late 1970s, *Harvard Business Review* published two articles entitled, *Everyone Who Makes It Has a Mentor* (Collins & Scott, 1978) and *Much Ado About Mentors* (Roche, 1979). In the Collins and Scott publication, Donald Perkins, who was then CEO of Jewel Companies said, "Everyone who succeeds has had a mentor" (p. 90), a strong claim on the outcomes of a mentoring relationship. Roche's (1979) study helped confirm how important mentoring was as a developmental

tool in organizations. Roche surveyed 1,250 top executives in the United States and found that two-thirds had mentors throughout their careers.

In 1988, Kram wrote *Mentoring at Work: Developmental Relationships in Organizational Life*. This seminal research on mentoring helped develop the basis for much of today's research (Ragins & Cotton, 1999). Kram (1988) conducted an in-depth interview study of relationships between younger and older managers in corporate settings. Investigating professionals' career histories, Kram (1988) interviewed protégés about their experiences with senior managers who had taken a personal interest in the protégés' development. As a result of her study, Kram (1988) identified two main functions of mentoring. First, mentors provide such qualities as exposure and protection, which are career development functions. Second, mentors provide psychosocial functions such as providing counsel and encouragement.

Kram (1983) also identified four phases of mentoring relationship: initiation, cultivation, separation, and redefinition. In order to understand fully the nature and impact of mentoring relationships, it is necessary to examine how the relationship changes over time (Kram, 1983; Levinson et al., 1978). The first stage of the mentoring relationship, initiation, occurs when the relationship between the mentor and protégé begins. In most cases, there is a balance of initiative on both sides of the relationship. Initial interactions create and support positive expectations for the mentoring relationship. In the very beginning of the initiation phase, the protégé has a strong positive fantasy in which the senior manager (mentor) is admired and respected for his or her abilities and competence to provide support and guidance. In time, the mentor's

behavior lends credibility to the fantasies and begins providing support and feedback to the protégé (Kram, 1983). The fantasies are now transformed into expectations, but uncertainty and ambiguity remain in the relationship.

During the second phase, cultivation, the mentoring relationship is comfortable; the boundaries have been identified, and uncertainty is gone. Kram (1983) stated, “The positive expectations that emerged from the initiation phase are continuously tested against reality” (p. 616). The relationship continues to grow while career development and psychosocial functions peak. First, the career development functions emerge, and as the interpersonal bond strengthens with time, the psychosocial functions emerge. While Kram claims the majority of the development occurs in the cultivation phase, there can be disappointment, however, when discovering the relationship cannot meet important developmental needs. Never the less, for some, the relationship far exceeds any expectations, and the bond is far more intimate and personally meaningful.

The third phase is separation and occurs when the mentor can no longer enhance the protégé or the protégé demonstrates independence while operating without support from a mentor. The separation can occur both structurally and psychologically. Perhaps the protégé is promoted to another level, creating an opportunity for the protégé to perform without their mentor and thereby, creating a structural separation. The structural separation can be trying for the protégé, but the protégé understand he or she can still call the mentor if necessary. Psychological separation can be the most difficult phase, because the anxiety and turmoil of being without continual development from the mentor may leave the protégé feeling lost and abandoned. In time, protégés realize they

are capable of handling most things on their own, and again, if necessary the mentors are still there to provide guidance if possible. The final step of separation occurs when the mentor and protégé realize that the relationship is no longer needed in the current form and should be transformed to meet the needs of both parties.

According to Kram (1983), the final phase is redefinition, which occurs when the mentor and protégé develop a peer like relationship, similar to a friendship. The mentor can still provide support, but the protégé usually acts independent of the mentor. The protégé is grateful for the guidance and shows gratitude for the mentor. There can be an adjustment period for the mentor and protégé as they begin to understand the new roles. However, in time, a close bond may develop between the mentor and protégé providing mutual support and strengthening the relationship.

Kram is the most cited author in the mentoring literature (Wanberg, et al., 2003). Her work is foundational to much of the research that has been conducted. During the 1980s, others also began to research mentoring relationships and the amount of mentoring research has steadily increased (Wanberg et al., 2003). Hunt and Michael (1983) led a study using mentoring as a career training and development tool. Noe (1988), another widely cited figure in mentoring literature (Hegstad, 2002), published studies on women and mentoring. Kram continued publishing on the development of mentoring relationships throughout the 1980s. As well, Fagenson (1988) began studying the outcomes of mentoring relationships with a study that compared mentored and non-mentored employees. In addition to the research on mentoring, during the 1980s books were published on the development of formal mentoring programs in organizations

(Phillips-Jones, 1983). As the literature demonstrates, mentoring relationships gained popularity as a tool for professional development during the 1980s.

During the 1990s, mentoring became popular across several disciplines and the number of books and publications about mentoring increased. Articles emerged in psychology journals as well as business journals when scholars discovered and began to understand more about the role of mentoring as a developmental intervention. A number of practitioners also developed prescriptive works on the development of mentoring relationships or programs within organizations. Murray (2001) is well known for her book *Beyond the Myths and Magic of Mentoring*. Murray developed several models based on empirical research that helped the business community utilize mentoring as a development tool. What began in the 1990s continues today—more research is being conducted on outcomes of mentoring relationships, types of mentoring relationships, benefits and costs to both the mentor and protégé, and perceptions of mentoring relationships (Chao, 1997; Eby, McManus, Simon, & Russell, 2000; Ragins & Cotton, 1999; Wanberg et al., 2003).

#### Theoretical Foundation

Until the 1990s, few researchers had incorporated theory into mentoring studies (Hegstad, 1999). However, in the 1990s, a major development in mentoring research gained attention, the application of theory. The foundational research on mentoring conducted by Kram (1983) and Levinson et al. (1978) draws from career and life stage theories as well as adult development theory; however, these theories do not directly link to the mentoring relationship. Instead, career and life stage theories and adult

development theory suggest that mentoring others is an important developmental component of both life and career stages (Kram, 1988; Levinson et al., 1978). Social learning theory is another theory focused on the development of others that identifies learning as a reciprocal interplay between the person, the environment, and the behavior (Bandura, 1986; Gibson, 2004).

Perhaps the strongest link between mentoring relationships and theory includes social exchange theory, communitarianism, leader-member exchange, and social networks theory (Hegstad, 1999, 2002; Higgins & Kram, 2001; Scandura & Schriesheim, 1994; Simon, 2002). Although research connecting theory and mentoring relationships is relatively new, social exchange theory is the most widely recognized theoretical foundation in mentoring relationships (Allen, Poteet, & Burroughs, 1997; Hegstad, 2002; Ragins & Scandura, 1994; Simon, 2002). Social exchange theory is grounded in economics and has been applied in a social context to describe the development of interpersonal relationships (Simon, 2002). Perceived costs and benefits of mentoring relationships “regulate the relationship between the mentor and protégé based on issues of reciprocity, social scarcity, equity, and cost” (Molm, 1994, p. 384). In this sense, mentors and protégés strive to sustain a balance of give and take in the relationship. On a macro level, Wright and Werther (1991) discussed how social exchange theory can be applied in terms of mentoring continuity. Protégés may seek to reciprocate their mentors’ actions by becoming mentors themselves in order to repay the organization and the mentor in terms of loyalty, commitment, and productivity (Hegstad, 2002). Power is a key component of social exchange theory. A mentor may provide

power by offering advice or furnishing information (Ragins, 1997). The power can be become more neutral, “as those who are mentored gain power, the exchange with their mentors becomes more balanced” (Hegstad, 1999, p. 384).

Communitarianism is when “people act in a pro-social, virtuous way as they are bound by core values, established and maintained by virtue of being members of a community” (Gibb, 1999, p. 1062). This is discussed in terms of mentoring relationships inside an organization where people help others without any expectation of reciprocal favors, because they belong to the same group and have the same norms or values. The leader-member exchange (LMX) model describes “how leaders use their position power (organizational resources) to develop different exchange relationships with different subordinates” (Scandura & Schriesheim, 1994, p. 1589). Research has linked the developmental activities of superiors, or mentors, and the career outcomes of subordinates, or protégés (Dreher & Ash, 1990), explaining one approach to connect LMX and mentoring relationships.

A final theory that has been considered in explaining mentoring relationships is social networks theory. Higgins and Kram (2001) identified one aspect within social networks theory as the developmental network perspective. The definition of an individual’s developmental network is “the set of people a protégé names as taking an active interest in and action to advance the protégé’s career by providing development assistance” (Higgins & Kram, 2001, p. 268). From this perspective, mentoring relationships become a part of individual developmental network, which is a subset of an entire social network (Burt, 1992). There is an emerging base of theories to support



mentoring relationships and explain the interactions and development that occur.

However, much work needs to be done in advancing the theoretical frameworks of mentoring and mentoring relationships (Hegstad, 2002; Scandura, 1997).

### What Is Mentoring?

Many popular definitions do not define mentoring simply as an activity. Instead, the definitions focus on the process of having a developmental relationship between two people. The one-on-one interpersonal relationship dimension of the mentoring relationship is a distinguishing element from other forms of learning and development. Gibbons (2000) defined mentoring as “a protected relationship in which learning and experimentation can occur, potential skills can be developed, and in which results can be measured in terms of competence gained rather than curricular territory covered” (p. 18).

Mentoring focuses on the learning and development needs of a protégé at a professional and personal level. Although beneficial to personal development, the majority of current literature examines mentoring relationships that are situated in work or professional development related contexts (Noe et al., 2002; Wanberg et al., 2003). Traditionally, mentoring has been defined as “an intense interpersonal exchange between a senior experienced colleague (mentor) and a less experienced junior colleague (protégé) in which the mentor provides support, direction, and feedback regarding career plans and personal development” (Russell & Adams, 1997, p. 12). Kram (1985) defined mentoring as “an experienced, productive manager who relates well to a less-experienced employee and facilitates his or her personal development for the benefit of the individual as well as that of the organization” (p. 65).

Hunt and Michael (1983) defined a mentor as “an individual with advanced experience and knowledge committed to providing support and increasing the upward mobility of a junior organization member, or protégé” (p. 475). Bass (1990) stated that “the mentor is a trusted counselor who accepts a guiding role in the development of a younger or less-experienced member of the organization. Mentors use their greater knowledge, experience, and status to help develop their protégé, not to simply pull the protégé up the organization on the mentor's coattails” (p. 90). Despite the differences, “it is generally agreed that mentoring is the most intense and powerful one-on-one developmental relationship, entailing the most influence, identification, and emotional involvement” (Wanberg et al., 2003, p. 5). Levinson, et al. (1978) summarized by saying, “The mentor relationship is one of the most complex; mentoring is not simple, an all or none matter” (p. 100).

Although there are themes that emerge, there is not one universal definition. Kram (1985) identified four commonalities in mentoring relationships:

First, they allow individuals to address concerns about self, career, and family by providing opportunities to gain knowledge, skills, and competence, and to address personal and professional dilemmas. Second, they benefit both individuals; these relationships thrive precisely because they respond to current needs and concerns of the two people involved. Third, they occur in an organizational context that greatly influences when and how they unfold. Finally, these kinds of relationships are not readily available to most people in

organizations; they remain a greatly needed but relatively rare occurrence in most work settings. (p. 2)

The first two commonalities listed are true for both informal and formal mentoring relationships. The later two are based on formal mentoring relationships within an organization. Shapiro, Hasetine, and Rowe (1978) developed a continuum of dyadic relationships. The mentor-protégé dyad appears to be the most intense or emotionally charged, hierarchical, parental, exclusionary, and elitist developmental relationship on the continuum (Shapiro et al., 1978). As discussed above, Kram and Shapiro identified some guidelines for the mentoring relationship; however, no one has identified all qualities of the relationship between mentor and protégé.

#### *Types of Mentoring Relationships*

There are two identified types of mentoring relationships: formal and informal. The three distinct differences between the two types “involve how the relationship is initiated, the structure of the relationship, and the processes involved in the relationship” (Ragins & Cotton, 1999, p. 530). The term *informal mentoring relationship* describes a spontaneous and voluntarily relationship. Informal mentoring relationships are flexible and loosely structured. The mentor and protégé are mutually identified and often develop a close and intimate relationship. In contrast, *formal mentoring relationships* are developed through a third party. Usually, the need for formal mentoring relationships are identified by the organization and specific goals have been pre-determined before the mentoring relationship begins. The relationships are structured and should have

identifiable and specific outcomes. The formal mentoring relationship has a set time frame and often comes with extrinsic rewards.

Many organizations recognize the important benefits of mentoring and have attempted to replicate informal mentoring relationships by creating formal mentoring programs (Ragins & Cotton, 1999). Although most formal mentoring programs are structured similarly to informal mentoring relationships, there are some distinct differences (see Table 1).

Table 1

*Types of Mentoring Relationships*

| Informal mentoring                                  | Formal mentoring            |
|---|-----------------------------|
| Develop spontaneously and voluntarily               | Assigned by third party     |
| Flexible and loosely structured                     | Structured                  |
| Intrinsic rewards                                   | Extrinsic rewards           |
| Intimate and close                                  | Professional                |
| Mutual identification                               | Organizationally identified |
| Kram 1988; Ragins & Cotton 1999; Rosser & Egan 2003 |                             |

Informal mentoring relationships are probably the most common type of mentoring and may last from a few weeks to a lifetime (Shea, 1994). Informal mentoring relationships develop spontaneously and voluntarily. The relationship develops out of mutual identification; mentors select protégés who are viewed as younger versions of themselves or perhaps the protégé finds someone they want to become more like (Ragins

& Cotton, 1999). Because there is mutual admiration, informal mentoring relationships are usually very intimate and close. An informal relationship is driven by the developmental needs of both the protégé and the mentor (Kram, 1988). The relationship is usually flexible and loosely structured. In some relationships, specific needs may be identified by the mentor early in the relationship. Sometimes the needs of the relationship are not realized until much later.

Informal mentoring relationships develop on the basis of perceived competence and interpersonal comfort (Ragins & Cotton, 1999). Informal mentoring relationships are generally characterized by a mutual understanding and acceptance of roles, and both the mentor and the protégé will exchange knowledge and advice (Shea, 1994). The learning outcomes of the mentoring relationship can be dependent on the mentor's competence, knowledge, skills, and abilities (Shea, 1994). Oftentimes, the mentor identifies the needs and helps the protégé with these needs. A relationship is often formed based on the mentor's abilities to provide meaningful personal assistance. Overall, an informal mentoring relationship is a path to developing deep mutual respect and, sometimes, a strongly rooted friendship (Shea, 1994).

As previously identified, a formal mentoring relationship is typically initiated by the assignment of members to the relationships by a third party (Ragins, Cotton, & Miller, 2000). A mentoring program coordinator typically pairs mentors and protégés on the basis of information gathered as part of the formal program process (Ragins & Cotton, 1999). Many times, the mentor and protégé have not met prior to the assignment, which makes initial identification and interpersonal comfort irrelevant. Participants may

enter formal mentoring relationships to meet organizational expectations and to be considered good organizational citizens. Formal mentors may receive more extrinsic rewards from their organization than informal mentors. However, formal mentoring program participants may not receive the intrinsic rewards often provided by an informal relationship (Poldre, 1994).

Formal mentoring relationships usually have measurable productivity goals and a set time frame in which to accomplish the goals. Instead of relying on a mentoring relationship to emerge, a systematic approach is taken in order to determine who and what the relationship will encompass (Gibb, 1999). A systematic and structured program is usually driven by organizational needs, not necessarily individual needs (Shea, 1994). Formal mentoring programs usually last between six months and one year (Ragins & Cotton, 1999). The model, frequency, and location of contact may be sporadic or may be specified in a relationship contract signed by both parties (Murray, 2001).

Another difference between formal and informal mentoring relationships is their purposes (Ragins, Cotton, & Miller, 2000). Informal relationships focus on protégés and the achievement of their long-term personal and professional goals. In contrast, formal mentors are often enlisted to focus on protégés' short-term career development, which may be applicable to their current positions (Ragins, Cotton, & Miller, 2000). There is a possibility the protégé could gain some personal and long-term benefit, but the organization is usually more focused on short-term results. Mentors in formal relationships may have comparatively limited impact on the protégé (Ragins, Cotton, & Miller, 2000).

*Research on Types of Mentoring Relationships*

Noe (1988) stated that the majority of mentoring relationships are informal; however, formal mentoring programs are increasing in popularity. There have been several studies that indicated protégés prefer the informal mentoring process (Chao, Walz, & Gardner, 1992; Ragins & Cotton, 1999). Mullen (1998) suggested that assigned mentoring relationships are less comfortable than naturally formed unions and inhibit communication. Ragins and Cotton (1999) found that informal mentor relationships were more beneficial to protégés than formal mentoring programs. The authors also found that informal mentors provided more of some of the psychosocial functions, such as counseling, facilitating social interactions, role modeling, or friendship, which supports the findings from Chao, Walz, and Gardner's (1992) study.

Results from Chao, Walz, and Gardner's (1992) study indicated that in informal mentoring relationships the mentor provided more coaching, more challenging assignments, and increased exposure-and-visibility for the protégé. These elements are all components of the career development function (Kram, 1985). Additionally, Fagenson-Eland, Marks, and Amendola (1997) reported protégés received greater psychosocial function in informally arranged mentor relationships compared to formal relationships. Perhaps the ability for those initiating informal mentoring relationships to select partners leads to the effectiveness of the relationship. Interestingly, male protégés in formal mentoring programs felt they received more counseling than men or women in informal mentoring relationships. However, female protégés felt they received far fewer

psychosocial functions from their mentor in the formal mentor program compared to their peers in informal relationships.

Ragins, Cotton, and Miller (2000) found that protégés in both formal and informal relationships who reported a high satisfaction level in their mentoring relationship all reported higher job satisfaction, organizational commitment, satisfaction with opportunities for promotion, career commitment, organization-based self-esteem, and procedural justice than protégés who reported marginal or dissatisfied mentoring relationships. These findings indicate the quality of the mentoring relationship does have an impact on the effectiveness of the relationship, more so than does the type of relationship (formal versus informal).

In addition, Ragins, Cotton, and Miller (2000) indicated that satisfaction with mentoring relationships accounted for more of the variance in job and career attitudes than the type of mentor. The results implied that it is better to not have a mentor than to be involved in a mentoring relationship that is dissatisfying or harmful. However, a satisfying mentoring relationship, either formal or informal, is likely to positively impact the career development of the protégé.

Few researchers have conducted comparisons of informal and formal mentoring relationships. The researchers try to clearly differentiate between the two types of relationships. There are prescriptive guides on how to develop formal relationships that are effective and, in many cases, resemble an informal relationship. However, there is not much evidence as to whether informal or formal mentoring relationships are most effective (Wanberg et al., 2003). There is also little empirical evidence to suggest that



formal mentoring programs can reproduce the benefits of informal mentoring relationships (Nemanick, 2000).

Ragins' and Cotton's (1999) discovered that being in a formal mentoring program did not bring about any career advantages over those who were not mentored at all. However, informally mentored protégés did receive higher compensation and more promotions than non-mentored individuals, and they also received higher compensation than those in formal mentor programs. Ragins and Cotton (1999) discovered a discrepancy in the actual compensation levels of the individuals in formal mentoring programs. Male protégés with male mentors received the highest compensation followed by women who were mentored by men. Female protégés with female mentors received the least compensation; however, female protégés did receive more promotions than male protégés of female mentors.

Ragins and Cotton's (1999) work provides the most comprehensive study on the comparison of formal and informal mentoring relationships. However, the study assumed the formal and informal relationships had the same intended outcomes. Although differences between formal and informal mentoring relationships were identified, the research appears biased towards the use of formal mentoring programs to supplement informal mentoring relationships, instead of viewing formal programs to be valuable as stand alone efforts (Rosser & Egan, 2003). Ragins and Cotton (1999) also mention the need for future research to examine the relationship between mentoring functions and career and organizational outcomes.

### *Functions of Mentoring*

Kram (1983) identified two mentoring functions, including the psychosocial function and the career development function (see Table 2). Kram stated, “Mentoring functions are those aspects of a developmental relationship that enhance both individuals’ growth and advancement” (p. 622). Kram’s two broad categories of mentoring functions are what distinguish mentoring from other non-developmental work relationships (Mullen, 1998). Both types of mentoring functions are the essential characteristics that differentiate the mentoring relationships and establish general parameters for the type of development individuals will receive from their mentor.

Table 2

#### *Functions of Mentoring Relationships*

| Career development function | Psychosocial function       |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Sponsorship                 | Role modeling               |
| Exposure and visibility     | Acceptance and confirmation |
| Coaching                    | Counseling                  |
| Protection                  | Friendship                  |
| Challenging assignments     |                             |

Kram (1988)

The career development function includes those aspects of the relationship that enhance “...learning the ropes and preparing for advancement in an organization” (Kram, 1985, p. 112). The knowledge and position of the mentor help to create the

career development function of a mentoring relationship. Mentors who have influence and understand the internal workings of an organization are able to provide exposure and visibility to help the protégés navigate effectively in an organization. Both protégés and mentors benefit from the career development function. Protégés gain visibility as well as increase the potential for promotion. Mentors gain respect for developing talented protégés into effective members of the organization (Ragins, 1997).

The psychosocial function of the mentoring relationship provides personal development to the protégé. The psychosocial function involves those aspects of a relationship that enhance a sense of competence, clarity of identity, and effectiveness in a professional role (Kram, 1988). The personal gain of a higher level of self worth both inside and outside the organization can be a benefit of the psychosocial competencies for the protégé. Personal development is possible because of the interpersonal relationships that foster mutual trust and increased intimacy in some mentor relationships (Kram, 1983). The quality of the bond between the mentor and protégé can develop into a strong connection, providing the protégé a sense of acceptance and confirmation of a positive self identity. The friendship that may develop will allow the mentors to counsel the protégés in dilemmas they may be facing and provide advice on personal issues as well.

Although there is some confusion as to whether role modeling should be viewed as part of the psychosocial function, Kram (1988) espoused that role modeling should be included in the definition of the psychosocial function. The quality of this interpersonal bond helps “the younger to identify with the older and to find a model whom the younger would like to become” (Kram, 1988, p. 23). Scandura (1992) claimed that role

modeling represents a third factor that is distinct from psychosocial support. However, there is little support for Scandura's claims. Kram (1988) demonstrated that role modeling is the most frequently reported psychosocial function. Many authors of mentoring literature have relied on Kram's definitions and research for the framing of mentoring functions (Allen, Russell, & Maetzke, 1997; Ragins, 1997; Ragins & Cotton, 1999).

### *Career Development Function*

In the context of mentoring relationships, career function is associated with benefits mentoring relationships provide to the career development and advancement of participants. Kram (1988) identified five roles within the career development function associated with mentoring, including: sponsorship; exposure-and-visibility; coaching; protection; and challenging assignments. There are several aspects associated with the career development function (see Table 2 above). The individual career development function associated with mentoring is not exclusively aligned with a particular career, job, or role. Kram (1988) suggested the more roles a mentor plays, the better developed the protégé will become. Sponsorship is one of the most frequently observed roles of the career development function.

Sponsorship includes actively nominating an individual for a lateral move or for a promotion. Kram (1988) says, "Sponsorship occurs at formal committee meetings as well as in informal discussions with peers, superiors, and subordinates who participate in promotion decisions" (p. 25). Sponsorship from several individuals strengthens the credibility of the recommendations made for the protégé. Often, when the motivation for

participation in formal mentoring programs focuses exclusively on sponsorship the relationship can be problematic. This is particularly the case when the motivation is for political gain within the organization and the protégé is seeking a promotion instead of developmental association for advancement (Kram, 1988).

The role in which mentors allow protégés to demonstrate competence and performance in an organization is known as exposure-and-visibility (Kram, 1988). Exposure-and-visibility serves as a socializing force and helps the protégé gain exposure needed for advancement. The exposure-and-visibility function involves assigning responsibilities that allow a lower-level manager to develop relationships with key figures in the organization who may judge the lower level manager's potential for advancement. These responsibilities also can allow the protégé to learn about different parts of the organization that he or she aspires to enter.

Coaching is a third contribution to the career development of protégés. Coaching enhances the junior person's knowledge and understanding of how to navigate effectively in the corporate world (Kram, 1988). Kram compares this to an athletic coach, "the senior colleague suggests specific strategies for accomplishing work objectives, for achieving recognition, and for achieving career aspirations' (p. 28).

The career development function also includes protection. Protection shields the protégé from potential damaging contacts or performances that could be detrimental to the protégé's advancement. However, a mentor must be careful not to smother the protégé by being overly protective. According to Kram, (1988) "Protection involves

taking credit and blame in controversial situations,” (p. 29) as well as intervening in situations where the protégé is ill equipped to achieve satisfactory results.

A final type of the career development function provides challenging assignments that allow the protégé to develop essential technical and managerial skills through work assignments and that encourage learning (Kram, 1985). The mentor will usually play a critical role in designing such work for the protégé. Kram posited, “The assignments of challenging work, supported with technical training and ongoing performance feedback, enables the junior manager to develop specific competencies and to experience a sense of accomplishment in a professional role” (Kram, 1988, p. 31). The mentor can relieve some specific responsibilities by assigning challenging work assignments to the protégé, benefiting both the protégé and the mentor.

#### *Psychosocial Function*

There are four roles within the psychosocial function, including: role modeling; acceptance-and-confirmation; counseling; and friendship. Psychosocial development may emerge from a strong interpersonal relationship between the mentor and the protégé. The mentor enhances the protégé’s sense of competence, identity, and effectiveness in both the protégé’s personal and professional life. The benefits of the psychosocial function extend beyond organizational advancement and generally carry over to other areas of the protégé’s life (Kram, 1988). The emotional bond developed in the mentoring relationship is the most crucial component and is an effective foundational component of the psychosocial function (Kram, 1985).

Role modeling is the most common psychosocial role and involves the mentor setting a desirable example for the protégé (see Table 2 above). The respect and admiration protégés have for their mentors helps the protégés focus on developing similar knowledge and skills demonstrated by the mentors. According to Kram (1985) “a senior colleague’s attitudes, values, and behavior provide a model for the junior colleague to emulate” (p. 33). As protégés aspire to grow and develop in an organization, they imagine themselves in higher positions by identifying with their mentors. Kram (1988) emphasized that role modeling succeeds because of the emotional connection formed in the relationship.

The acceptance-and-confirmation role provides the mentor and the protégé with a sense of self (Kram, 1988). The sense of self stems from the positive regard conveyed by both the mentor and the protégé. Acceptance-and-confirmation allows a less experienced person to experiment with new behaviors. Kram (1988) stated, “A relationship that provides this function has a basic trust that encourages the young adult to take risks and to venture into unfamiliar ways of relating to the world of work without a fear of rejection” (p. 35). Developing this component of mentoring relationships may mean the relationship has reached new depths, providing a level of understanding that few relationships can provide. Once the protégé feels acceptance-and-confirmation, the protégé may begin to disagree and become confrontational with the mentor. The depth of such a relationship allows both the mentor and protégé to tolerate differences found in one another. The tolerance leads to a deeper understanding of self.

The psychosocial function also includes counseling. Kram (1988) said, “The counseling function helps the individual to explore personal concerns that may interfere with a positive self esteem” (p. 36). The mentor counsels the protégé by providing a sounding board for the protégé to explore ideas, share fears, and discusses any ambivalence the protégé might be feeling. Both the content and the process of interaction are important to examine in order to understand the nature of the counseling role (Kram, 1988). Internal conflicts, such as ethical dilemmas, that put the protégés at odds with themselves can be the focus of the discussion. Being able to obtain advice, perhaps from someone who has had similar experiences, can help the protégé to overcome internal conflicts. The mentors become a confidant, and the protégés derive comfort in discovering that they can share doubts and concerns (Kram, 1988).

A final role of the psychosocial function is friendship. Once a mentoring relationship has developed into a friendship, the mentor and protégé have a mutual sense of liking. Through the protégé’s continued development, the mentor and protégé may have informal interactions resulting in casual conversation, which may lead to the protégé feeling more like a peer to the mentor (Kram, 1985). Both the mentor and protégé finds in the relationship “someone he or she enjoys sharing personal experiences with, eating lunch with, or at times, someone to escape from the pressures of work with” (p. 38). Friendship adds a deeper sense of enjoyment for both the protégé and the mentor.



### *Similarities of Mentoring Functions*

Several factors have been identified that influence whether career development or psychosocial functions are provided in a relationship (Kram, 1983). Career development and psychosocial functions are determined based on the needs of the protégé and by the roles the mentor can provide. The purpose of the relationship will change as individuals' needs change. The needs of the protégé that are considered most important by the mentor will affect what functions are sought and offered in a relationship.

Interpersonal skills of the individuals involved influence the functions provided. The effectiveness of the interpersonal communication between the mentor and the protégé will determine how the relationship starts, how it will continue, and the range of career development and psychosocial functions. The final influence is the organizational context that shapes the opportunity to develop certain components of both career development and psychosocial functions.

### *Research on Functions of Mentoring Relationships*

There are some studies whose authors indicated the functions present in a mentoring relationship have an effect on outcomes for the protégé. Protégés who experience more career-related support from their mentors generally enjoy greater organizational rewards, (Chao, 1997) better chance for advancement, and are more committed to the organization and satisfied with their jobs (Scandura, 1997). Scandura (1997) found, "The psychosocial function contributed to career expectations, satisfaction and commitment, suggesting that the support provided by mentors allow protégés to

cope with stress of career management and hold positive attitudes toward the work environment” (p. 67).

Mentoring relationships that provide both the psychosocial and career development functions are characterized by a greater intimacy and strength of the interpersonal bond. As well, mentoring relationships that include both functions are more critical to development and more unique than other relationships (Mullen, 1998). The presence of both functions also aids in producing protégés that perceive higher levels of procedural justice within their organizations (Scandura, 1997). The greatest level of combined career development and psychosocial mentoring functions is performed by mentors who initiated the relationship; mentors who feel they have value in the organization; mentors who allow their protégés to influence them; and mentors who spend more time with their protégés (Mullen, 1998).

The amount of time a mentor spends with his or her protégé does not affect the protégé’s level of satisfaction. Rather, functions served by the mentor have a much stronger effect on the protégé’s satisfaction (Allen, Russell, & Maetzke, 1997). Allen, Russell, and Maetzke (1997) also indicated that protégés’ levels of satisfaction with their current mentoring relationships were related to their willingness to serve as mentors to others in the future. Another interesting finding of this study was that hierarchical distance between mentor and protégé was not related to the type of mentoring functions provided by the mentoring relationship (Allen, Russell, & Maetzke, 1997).

## Mentoring and Human Resource Development

Before discussing outcomes of mentoring relationships, it is necessary to understand HRD and the link that mentoring relationships have with HRD. HRD has been defined as “the process of improving learning and performance in individual, group, and organization contexts through domains of expertise such as lifelong learning, career development, training and development, and organization development” (Texas A&M University, 2002). In other words, “HRD is about the development of people within organizations” (Gilley, Eggland, & Gilley, 2002, p.4). From an individual perspective, development cannot occur unless people participate in activities designed to introduce new knowledge (Gilley et al., 2002).

HRD scholars have identified three levels of development including: individual; groups or work processes; and organizations. This implies the field of HRD is a multilevel discipline (Swanson & Holton, 2001). Because individual people make up the organization, the level most linked with mentoring relationships is the individual level. Weinberger (1998) listed eighteen different definitions of HRD, chronologically from earliest to most recent. The authors of fifteen of the eighteen definitions use the word individual or imply individual development through words such as personnel or employee. In general, most HRD scholars recognize the individual component of HRD.

Individuals are what make up an organization, and if HRD is truly developing the human resource, then individuals must be a focus. When defining HRD, Gilley, et al, (2002) described development of people as the advancement of knowledge, skills, and competencies. This focuses on the individual development and also a philosophical

commitment to the professional advancement of people within an organization. Gilley, et al. went on to describe the development of individuals through formal and informal activities, as well as organized and self-directed activities to enhance learning, performance, knowledge, and skills. Individual development links directly to organizational effectiveness.

The relationship between mentoring and HRD is observed through the three domains of HRD: organization development, training and development, and career development (McLagan, 1989). From an organization development standpoint, mentoring can serve as a means for planned change used to improve employee effectiveness (Hegstad, 2002). Mentoring can serve as a form of on-the-job training to develop key competencies enhancing employees' abilities to perform their job functions, which is the defining component of training and development (DeSimone & Harris, 1998). In terms of career development, mentoring can be used as a strategy allowing employees to shape and perform their work to better achieve their professional goals (Cummings & Worley, 2001). Hegstad (2002) made the link between McLagan's professional roles in HRD to include developer, instructor, and evaluator.

Gilley, et al. (2002) described mentoring as an organizational responsibility designed to enhance career development by stating, "The primary purpose of mentoring systems is to introduce people to the inner network of the organization, which may assist them in their career advancement" (Gilley, et al., 2002, p. 118). Mentoring programs help clarify expectations of the organization, provide objective assessment of strengths

and weaknesses, and provide feedback. A mentoring relationship is one of trust, which can instill loyalty and commitment to the people within an organization.

While discussing performance management, Gilley et al. noted that the purpose of mentoring is to help employees advance their careers. The authors said, “The mentoring role allows managers to help employees unlock the mysteries of the organization, while directing them through the perils and pitfalls of organizational life” (p. 119). Employees who are committed to and understand an organization will perform at a higher level. Mentoring helps employees develop this type of commitment.

DeSimone and Harris (1998) connected mentoring to training and development and also suggested that mentoring contributes to both life development and career development. The research stated, “The mentor provides the protégé with career support, by opening doors, teaching the ropes of the organization, creating potential opportunities to demonstrate competence, enhancing visibility, and ensuring the protégé has challenging work” (DeSimone & Harris, 1998, p. 377). Not only does the protégé benefit, but the mentor benefits as well, with such things as respect from the protégé, support, and a mutually reinforcing relationship that is committed to the organization. DeSimone and Harris also supported the use of mentoring relationships in the development of women and minorities. In terms of minorities, research found that the development of minorities in organizations is negatively affected by the absence of mentors.

Although Swanson and Holton (2001) did not refer to the word mentoring, they did mention individual learning, which focuses primarily on individual learning as an

outcome and the individual learner as the target of intervention. Mentoring is an intervention that focuses on the individual and the individual as the learner. It is important to mention the findings of Hegstad (2002) and Egan and Rosser (2004), which concluded that companies enjoy improved performance, increased motivation, higher job satisfaction, and increased organizational commitment as benefits of mentoring relationships.

Cummings and Worley (2001) have determined that mentoring is one of the most useful ways to help employees advance in their careers and believe that, “mentoring is a powerful intervention that assists members in the establishment, advancement and maintenance stages of their careers” (p. 423). Recognizing the difficulty in creating a formal mentoring program, Cummings and Worley (2001) suggested that human resource development practitioners use a workshop to train managers how to be effective mentors. If effective, mentors can help ensure the success of other employees by providing them with challenging opportunities to further develop the employees professionally.

It has been inspiring to see mentoring referred to in the three primary areas of HRD (Gilley, et al., 2002; Swanson & Holton, 2001; DeSimone & Harris, 1998). Wanberg et al. (2003) describes mentoring relationships as “the most intense and powerful one-on-one, development relationship” (p. 41). HRD practitioners need to better understand how to utilize mentoring relationships in developing professionals. In addition, HRD scholars need to focus research on how mentoring relationships work and how practitioners can use mentoring to develop individuals and improve organizations.

As previously identified, at least one third of companies in the United States use mentoring to further develop their employees. A better understanding of mentoring and its effect on the individuals in an organization, as well as the impact of mentoring on the organization overall, will be beneficial (Porter, 2001).

### *Executive Development and Human Resource Development*

As the needs of organizations continue to change, it is necessary to recognize some of the challenges executives face in today's organizations. Increasing diversity in the workforce, globalization and competition, expanded human resource planning, the changing nature of work, and rising employee expectations are just a few of the issues executives are dealing with in today's organizations. It is important to note that McCall (1998) suggested there is no common list of competencies that an executive needs to have. McCall promoted that different sets of attributes might be equally effective. However, it is important to understand the environment and society when discussing the needs of executives today.

Although there is a large body of literature that describes training and development at the managerial level, there is little that specifically addresses executive training and development (Sztucinski, 2001). Traditionally, executive development has been defined as classroom based training designed to provide executives and managers the skills and knowledge necessary to perform their jobs effectively (Bolt, 1989; Nilsson, 1987). However, executive development has had some problems, primarily the lack of effectiveness of traditional training and development programs (Sztucinski, 2001; Conger, 1992; Hall, Otazo & Hallenbeck 1999). The major theme that emerges from the

current literature is that the traditional approach to executive development is not effective (Conger, 1992; Sztucinski, 2001).

The literature provides three major reasons as to why traditional classroom-based training and development is ineffective for executives, including: the nature of the organization and the required leadership (Crainer & Dearlove, 1999); the executive's organizational context (Bassi, Cheng & Lewis, 1998); and the training methodologies employed (Fidler, 1995; Sztucinski, 2001). The executive world is no longer one of clearly defined problems and variables (Sztucinski, 2001). The environment is continually changing as well as the rules governing the environment (Sui, 1978).

The executive role is a lonely one (Olesen, 1996). As their careers advance, the divide between their roles and others in the organization becomes greater, causing an isolated view from the top. When executives are removed from the opportunity to get feedback, they may begin to ask, "Why should I change what got me to the top?" There is an idea of perceived infallibility, which leaves executives to their own devices (McCall, 1998). The myth is "if they still need to be developed at that level, they shouldn't be there. The higher you go the less development you need" (Saporito, p. 100, 1996). Even when a leader is aware of developmental needs, organizational norms may call for senior managers to appear confident and competent (Sztucinski, 2001).

Livingston (1971) presented the idea that much of what is needed for successful management is not taught in the classroom, but left to be learned on the job. However, much that could be learned on the job is not, because there is no one available to teach the top executives (Sztucinski, 2001). HRD professionals are moving toward a new



direction for executive development because of the perceived inadequacies of traditional executive training and development. Sztuckinski (2001) recognized seven major trends that make up this new approach, including: a strong emphasis on development versus knowledge or skill acquisition (McCall, 1998); clear linkages of executive development to the company's business strategy (Fulmer, 1996); continuous learning (Fulmer, 1997); experientially focused (Vicere, 1996); interactive design (Fidler, 1995); and self-directed (McCall, 1998) and customized development (McCall, 1998).

In order to keep up with the needs of today's business world, executive development needs to be an on-going, self-directed, interactive, customized training and development that is linked to the executives company's business strategy and is experiential in nature (Sztuckinski, 2001). In order to provide such training and development, there will need to be multiple methods used. A popular method in the literature is the use of assessment tools (Vicere, 1996). Assessments provide the executives with an understanding of their strengths and weaknesses. By utilizing assessment and goal setting, the executive has a clear idea of the plan for improvement (Vicere, 1996).

Feedback and reflection are two other methods found in the literature that support the new direction of training and development for executives. McCall (1998) suggested that feedback is a key catalyst for change. Mentors are a strong source of feedback (Orth, Wilkinson & Benfari, 1987). An important ingredient in the current direction of executive development is reflection (McCall, 1998). By implementing a well-designed executive development process, a mechanism can be built in to aid in

critical reflection (Sztuckinski, 2001), especially after being given direct and useful feedback.

A final method identified by Sztuckinski (2001) is interactive learning techniques. Examples of these techniques include: on the job development (McCall, 1988); small group workshops (Fulmer, 1997); simulations; outdoor adventure learning; forums with other executives (Fidler, 1995); and executive coaching (Vicere, 1996). There is no suggestion that HRD professionals should use any one single methodology to develop successful executives (Sztuckinski, 2001).

There is also not a strong theoretical foundation for executive development and although executive coaching is on the rise, I have been unable to identify much research on its effectiveness and use at the present time. By reviewing the needs of the executives and their unique leadership positions, mentoring relationships could be the best source of development. As past CEOs and other executives provide feedback and share stories from their experiences, current executives could learn and understand how to improve in their own organizations. HRD scholars and practitioners have an opportunity to facilitate these mentoring relationships and continue to expand on meeting the developmental needs of executives today.

#### Outcomes of Mentoring Relationships

Authors of available research have provided a breadth of topics on mentoring relationships; however, there is little depth. Research on mentoring has been conducted for a relatively short amount of time (Ragins & Cotton, 1999). Whether mentoring and its associated functions impact work and career-related outcomes has been a major focus

of mentoring research (Wanberg, et al, 2003). Individual and organizational outcomes, both positive and negative, are abundant in the literature (Hegstad, 2002). In order to make sense of the widespread information, the research will be grouped into three separate areas in order to cluster the current literature on outcomes of mentoring relationships. These three areas include: outcomes for the protégé; outcomes for the mentor; and outcomes for the organization. Much of the available literature supports the notion that mentors and protégés deliver benefits to each other. This, in turn, benefits the organization as a whole (O'Reilly, 2001).

#### *Mentoring Outcomes for the Protégé*

The majority of the research on mentoring outcomes focuses on the outcomes associated with the protégé (see Table 3), rather than on outcomes for the mentor or the organization (Wanberg, et al., 2003). The authors believed that the “research in this area is fairly consistent in finding that there is an association between being a protégé and favorable outcomes” (Wanberg, et al., 2003, p. 9). Protégés enjoy increased pay, higher job satisfaction, and faster promotion opportunities than their non-mentored counterparts, and also benefit from increased learning opportunities, support, and interpersonal relations (Chao, et al., 1992; Fagenson, 1989; Mobley, et al., 1994; Orpen, 1995; Scandura, 1992). On the negative side, protégés can suffer from disillusionment, a stifled career if ineffectively mentored, and feelings of isolation due to extreme dependence on the mentor (Baum, 1992; Fagenson, 1994; Ragins, 1997).

Table 3

*Mentoring Outcomes for the Protégé*

| Positive Outcomes for the Protégé               | Negative Outcomes for the Protégé                          |
|---|--|
| Increased job satisfaction                      | Lower levels of procedural justice                         |
| Higher expectations for advancement             | Higher job burnout (individuals with more than one mentor) |
| Improved career satisfaction                    | Conflict events: embarrassment, disagreement, negativity   |
| Improved career commitment                      | Lack of mentor expertise                                   |
| Intentions to stay at an organizations          | Mentors manipulative behavior                              |
| Higher levels of compensation                   | Isolation  |
| Higher levels of promotions                     | Potential for loss of self-esteem                          |
| Increased organizational power                  | Blocked opportunity  |
| More influence over organizational policy       | Betrayal   |
| Increased access to important people            | Ineffective mentor costs career time                       |
| Higher level of resource power                  | Disillusionment  |
| Increased organizational visibility             | Disappointment in mentor                                   |
| Friendship                                      | Animosity of jealousy from coworkers                       |
| More acceptance                                 | Dependant of mentor growth                                 |
| Development of professional identity            | Perceived mentor change: nurturer to controller            |
| Decreased “plateau” feelings                    | Relationship conflicts                                     |
| Skills translated into opportunity              | Mentor takes credit for protégé’s work                     |
| More help in securing developmental assignments | Negative feedback if associated with ineffective mentor    |

Table 3 Continued

| Positive Outcomes for the Protégé       | Negative Outcomes for the Protégé   |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| Reduced initial entry shock             | Mentor neglects protégé             |
| Increased career guidance               | Mentor uses power inappropriately   |
| Increased visibility                    | Dissimilar values can cause tension |
| Improved mental well-being              |                                     |
| Broadened perspective on executive life |                                     |
| Decreased work role ambiguity           |                                     |
| Enhanced career expectations            |                                     |

Summarized from Baum, 1992; Chao, 1997; Chao, et al., 1992; Cummings & Worley, 1997; Fagenson, 1988, 1989, 1994; Hegstad, 2002; Hunt & Michael, 1983; Kram, 1985; Levinson, et al., 1978; Phillips-Jones, 1983; Ragins, 1997; Ragins, Cotton, & Miller, 2000; Roche, 1979; Scandura, 1992; Scandura, Tejada, Werther, & Lankau, 1996; Wanberg, et al., 2003.

### *Research on Mentoring Relationships Focusing on the Protégé*

The benefits of mentoring relationships to the protégé are so valuable that identification with a mentor should be considered a major developmental task (Russell & Adams, 1997). Furthermore, the benefits to the protégé are the most obvious, more immediate (Collins & Scott, 1978), and best documented (Kram, 1985; Scandura, 1992). Protégés experienced long-term benefits from mentoring relationships (Chao, 1997), such as more promotions, career satisfaction, higher compensation (Chao, Walz, & Garner, 1992; Fagenson, 1989; Kram, 1988; Whitely, Dougherty, & Dreher, 1991), and more mobility (Scandura, 1992). Some of the more fundamental benefits for the protégé are job security and career advancement (Scandura, Tejada, Werther, & Lankau, 1996),

but the greatest value lies in the knowledge that one has a significant ally. The authors found that “knowing someone who is valued by those deemed to be superior in power, position, or experience, a protégé will have increased self confidence and the ability to take career-enhancing risks” (Scandura, Tejada, Werther, & Lankau, 1996, p. 54).

*Selection and Protégé Outcomes.* Early in the mentoring literature, Kanter (1977) suggested that protégés are selected by mentors for several reasons: (1) good performance; (2) the right social background; (3) they know the officers/managers socially; (4) they look good in a suit; (5) they are socially similar; (6) they have the opportunity to demonstrate the extraordinary; and (7) they have high visibility. Protégés have something special that allows them to stand out and gain exposure. This uniqueness identifies the protégés as having potential. More recently, researchers found that mentored individuals (protégés) are more likely to be the organization’s future leaders (Whitely, Dougherty, & Dreher, 1991).

*Research on the Outcomes Focused on Women and Mentoring.* Women will continue to become involved in industry as research shows that the number of women will “increase from 46 percent of the workforce in 1995 and to about 50 percent in 2020” (DeSimone & Harris, 1998, p. 16), which has created more women who are seeking management positions. However, there are not enough women available in upper management to serve as mentors to young female professionals (Noe, et al., 2002). Women typically have a more difficult time establishing informal mentoring relationships than men (Nemanick, 2000).

In order to provide women this type of relationship, many organizations developed formal mentoring programs to help women meet their career development needs. Mentoring relationships help women integrate into a male dominated culture and advance in an organization (Stewart & Gudykunst, 1982). Women who have had a mentor report greater job satisfaction, job success, greater self confidence, and a stronger support base than women who have not had a mentor (Noe, et al., 2002). Reich (1986) found that women who have been mentored have greater self-confidence. “Mentoring may help women to develop career plans and to acquire a self-identity” (Noe, 1988).

According to Noe, et al. (2002), the absence of women in upper management to mentor young female professionals is being felt by organizations. It is inevitable that cross-gender mentoring will need to occur in order to provide women with mentors. Women are more likely than men to report the need for a mentor (Ragins & Cotton, 1991); however, there are issues that can arise from cross-gender mentoring. One such issue, as identified by Clawson and Kram (1984), is maintaining an appropriate distance to ensure there is no perception of a sexual relationship. When a relationship is perceived as being too close, the mentor and protégé may lose more career opportunities because of suspicion or rumors. The fear of this occurring may have some mentoring relationships too far apart to be productive. If an effective cross-gender relationship can be achieved, the experience can be very beneficial for both the mentor and protégé, because they can learn from two different perspectives (Clawson & Kram, 1984).

Although cross-gender mentoring relationships have been found to be effective, research indicates that women who are mentored by women gain unique benefits (Noe,

et al., 2002; Egan & Rosser, 2004). The ability for women to relate with women allows for more mentoring to occur in same-gender mentoring relationships (Noe et al., 2002). Female protégés report receiving more social support while being mentored by another female (Scandura & Viator, 1994) and are provided strategies for work life balance (Ragins & McFarlin, 1990). Sosik and Godshalk (2000) were able to identify that female mentors provide more role modeling for women than do male mentors. Egan and Rosser (2004) indicated that women in mentoring relationships have higher job satisfaction and organizational commitment. More importantly, a comparison was made of women in mentoring relationships to those not in mentoring relationships and researchers determined women in mentoring relationships had increased performance ratings.

Because women mentors are in high demand, more research should to be conducted in order to create alternatives to meet the needs of female professionals seeking development opportunities. Organizations may observe poor job performance due to limited opportunities for young female professionals to develop interpersonal and professional skills (Noe et al., 2002). The use of mentoring relationships should be considered as an efficient alternative for the development of females in the workplace.

*Diversity factors effecting protégé outcomes.* Ragins (1997) conducted research on the “diversified mentoring relationship” which comprises mentors and protégés who differ with regard to power differences within the organization. A diversified mentoring relationship in a predominantly white male organization might involve the pairing of a white male and a woman, African American, or a member of an underrepresented group. A key finding from Ragins’ research was that mentor behaviors in both informal and



formal mentoring relationships vary as a function of the composition of the relationship. The behavior of the mentor is often influenced by stereotypes and perceived knowledge and abilities of the protégé, which can be affected by the race or gender of the protégé. Therefore a mentor's behavior can positively or negatively affect the protégé's career and professional development based on the mentor's perceptions and behavior.

Wanberg et al. (2003) identified twenty studies focused on race, compared to more than fifty researching gender with regard to mentoring. Thomas and Alderfer (1989) reported that race has major influences on the dynamic of mentoring relationships. Although African Americans do find mentors, they tend to receive more psychosocial support from same-race mentors than from others, but similar levels of career development support from same-race and cross-race mentors. shows that women and non-white men do not have equal access to influential mentors, particularly mentors of the same race (Dreher & Cox, 1996; Dreher and Dougherty, 1997). However, the authors of the literature suggest there are no race differences with respect to establishing mentoring relationships (Dreher & Dougherty, 1997). Ragins (1997) reported that individuals may be more likely to enter racially diversified mentoring relationships if they have positive attitudes toward diversity and have had positive prior experiences in racially heterogeneous relationships.

Ragins and Cotton (1991) researched perceived barriers to mentoring caused by gender differences. The reasons for expected barriers included gender roles, sexual perceptions, and lack of opportunity to gain a mentor (Hunt & Michael, 1983; Kram, 1985). Kram (1985) suggested that a variety of problems could arise in cross-gender

mentoring, such as marital disruption, sexual attraction, and gossip that can damage the effectiveness of the relationship. Kram (1983) also identified early in the literature that female protégés are more likely to experience overprotection, greater social distance, and general discomfort in a male-mentored relationship. However, Noe (1988) claimed mentoring by a male may help women develop career plans and acquire self-identity.

In another study, there were no effects associated with career progress outcomes for the interaction of mentoring and socioeconomic origin (Dreher & Ash, 1990). However, Whitely, Dougherty, and Dreher (1991) indicated the career progress of young managers from high socioeconomic origins may benefit more from career mentoring than managers from lower origins. This outcome may have occurred because the Whitely, Dougherty, and Dreher (1991) study focused primarily on the career development function. Because only one function, career development, was included in the study it is undetermined if the results will hold true if both functions were considered.

*Power's effect on protégé outcomes.* Protégés' alliances with their mentors, often powerful people, provide the protégés with power and access to influential organizational members with whom they would not normally associate, allowing them to bypass the hierarchy (Fagenson, 1989). Fagenson (1994) found that this “reduces their dependency on the power and influence of their superiors, peers, and departments” (p. 56). Fagenson (1994) assumed that perception of power might reduce protégés' dependency on other organizational members, helping the protégés to overcome any resistance to all other organizational members with power. However, the findings from

the study did not support the hypothesis that peers, superiors, and/or departmental members would be jealous of an individual with a mentor.

*Communication.* Communication is a key factor in mentoring relationships as Kram (1985) stated, “Protégés benefit from the protégé role to the extent that they communicate with their mentors to receive guidance and advice from them” (p. 68). Fagenson (1994) found that the more mentors communicated with their protégés the more counseling and support protégés received. The desire to be like their mentors may motivate protégés to be more proactive in information seeking (Lankau & Scandura, 2002), and this may result in increased communication and learning. Fagenson-Eland et al. (1997) reported less communication in formal relationships than in informal relationships.

*Barriers to and negative outcomes to the protégé.* There are barriers that protégés have to overcome in order to gain a mentor; as well, there can be negative outcomes from a mentoring relationship. From early research, Levinson et al. (1978) illustrated that mentors can be excessively critical, demanding, and authoritative toward protégés and can even exploit or understate protégés careers. Kram (1985) also documented a relationship that started out as mutually beneficial, but over time became frustrating and eventually destructive.

More recently, Scandura (1998) related the negative aspects of mentoring relationships to Duck’s (1994) social-psychological typology of the ‘dark side’ of close interpersonal relationships (Eby, McManus, Simon, & Russell, 2000, p. 5). Scandura (1998) found that mentoring relationships to be dysfunctional, ending in negative

outcomes for the protégé. Ragins (1997) identified circumstances that could initiate a negative outcome, including the mentor and protégé having different backgrounds and dissimilar attitudes, values, and beliefs. Eby et al. (2000) reported that more than half of the respondents in their study had at least one negative mentoring relationship during their careers, and the number one cause was differences in attitudes, values, and beliefs between the protégé and the mentor. This finding demonstrates the importance of interpersonal compatibility in the mentoring relationship.

*Additional research on the outcomes of protégés.* Much of the mentoring literature is based on the protégés' personal perceptions of the protégé or the mentor. The perceptions weaken many studies because individual perceptions can vary greatly (Wanberg et al., 2003). Fagenson-Eland et al. (1997) conducted a study on the perceptions of mentoring relationships and found the perceptions of mentors and protégés are affected by both mentor-protégé relationship structure and experience factors.

Individuals who were mentored reported more promotions, career satisfaction, higher compensation (Fagenson, 1989; Kram, 1988), and more mobility (Scandura, 1992). It is a rare occurrence if research appears on the performance outcomes of mentoring relationships (Wanberg et al., 2003). Egan and Rosser (2004) discovered protégés involved in highly facilitated mentoring relationships did improve individual performance as identified by protégés and their managers. Involvement in mentor relationships does provide positive career development results.

### *Mentoring Outcomes for the Mentor*

Mentors also benefit from mentoring relationships (see Table 4). Levinson, et al. (1978) stated, “There is a measure of altruism in mentoring... but much more than altruism is involved; the mentor is doing something for himself. He is making productive use of his own knowledge and skill in middle age. He is learning in ways not otherwise possible” (p. 253). Although easily recognized, few studies have examined the outcomes for the mentor (Wanberg et al., 2003). Kram’s (1985) seminal work on mentoring suggested, “while helping a young adult establish a place in the adult world of work, an individual benefits from providing support and guidance. Through helping others, a mentor gains internal satisfaction and respect for his or her capabilities as teacher and advisor” (p. 3).

Mentors gain identity, visibility, and career rejuvenation as well as self-satisfaction and improved perspective (Allen, Poteet, & Burroughs, 1997; Hunt & Michael, 1983). However, mentors may also have more to lose than protégés. Negative outcomes include time and energy of mentoring requirements, envy stemming from the protégé’s fresh career opportunities, and poor protégé performance reflecting negatively on the mentor. Each of the negative outcomes can cause long-term negative effects for the mentor (Allen, Poteet, & Burroughs, 1997; Ragins & Scandura, 1994).

Table 4

*Mentoring Outcomes for the Mentors*

| Positive Outcomes for the Mentor  | Negative Outcomes for the Mentor                                 |
|---|--|
| Increased career satisfaction   | Time required to mentor  |
| Increased career success  | Favoritism issues  |
| Builds a support network for future benefit                                   | Abusive relationships – the protégé misuses the relationship     |
| Satisfaction in helping others  | Feelings of failure when the protégé does not succeed            |
| Increase learning   | Energy expended on non-work tasks                                |
| Increased visibility and respect  | Not always perceived as part of job                              |
| Greater professional identity   | Envy protégés' opportunities                                     |
| Networking opportunities  | Protégé failure reflects poorly on mentor                        |
| Improved performance  | Few returns for added responsibility                             |
| Career rejuvenation   | Difficulty to balance the development vs. control of the protégé |
| Protégé's success reflects positively on mentor                               |  |
| Protégé has loyalty to mentor   |  |
| Support network   |  |
| Rewarding to see others succeed   |  |
| Increased motivation to learn and stay up to date in field                    |  |
| Increased job performance   |  |
| Learning opportunities regarding technical and cross generational information |  |
| Increased power base  |  |

Table 4 Continued

| Positive Outcomes for the Mentor   | Negative Outcomes for the Mentor |
|--|----------------------------------|
| Important influence on promotion decisions   |                                  |
| Enhanced professional focus  |                                  |
| Increased perspective on difference operating levels of organization   |                                  |
| Summarized from Allen, Poteet, & Burroughs, 1997; Baum, 1992; Hegstad, 2002; Hunt & Michael, 1983; Kram, 1985; Levinson, et al., 1978; Ragins & Scandura, 1994; Wanberg, et al., 2003. |                                  |

### *Research on Outcomes for the Mentor*

The authors of available research determined the protégé is not the only one developing in the relationship. A mentor is likely to gain a sense of personal satisfaction from knowing he or she assisted in the professional development of a protégé. Many times, a mentor will gain an increased appreciation for professional accomplishments and passing down personal beliefs, values, and wisdom (O'Reilly, 2001). A mentor might begin to question assumptions regarding the profession and constantly look for new and better ways to perform his or her job, especially when someone is watching (Hunt & Michael, 1983).

A majority of the current literature focuses on the impact of mentoring on work and career-related outcomes (Wanberg et al., 2003). Wanberg et al. identified six studies that focused on the outcomes of mentoring relationships for the mentor. Distal types of outcomes such as compensation and promotion were examined in two of the identified study. The authors of the remaining four studies focused on “mentoring benefits” both intrinsic and extrinsic. These four studies attempted to categorize the benefits into

groups. Allen, Poteet, and Burroughs (1997) identified four categories incorporating both Kram's (1985) respected work and Zey's (1984) thorough study on mentor benefits. The four supported categories of benefits to the mentor include: support networks; self-satisfaction from helping others; job related learning, visibility, and recognition; and the benefits of having developed a competent workforce.

There is no agreement in the literature about the known outcomes for the mentor. Zey (1984) concluded that although the research examining the mentor's perspective is small, there is evidence that mentors do receive benefits from being in a mentoring relationship. In contrast, Wanberg et al. (2003) stated, "Whether mentoring translates into outcomes for mentors similar to those examined for protégés is not clear from the scant evidence currently available" (p. 43). More research should be conducted to clarify the outcomes for the mentor.

#### *Outcomes for the Organization*

The organizational outcomes stem "from mentor and protégé outcomes" (Wanberg, et al., 2003, p. 91). Researchers indicate that mentor relationships can lead to increased employee motivation, commitment, retention, and leadership (Fagenson-Eland, et al., 1997). As well, mentoring relationships can provide cost effective training and career development for organizations (Robinson, 2001). However, organizations may experience setbacks from work interference and interpersonal tension (Baum, 1992; Scandura, 1997). Because of the benefits mentoring relationships can provide for the protégé and mentor, it can be concluded that there are also benefits to the organization (see Table 5). When individuals in an organization are benefiting, the organization as a



whole will benefit. This conclusion might explain why there is not more research on the outcomes of mentoring for the organization.

Table 5

*Mentoring Outcomes for the Organization*

| Positive Outcomes for the Organization   | Negative Outcomes for the Organization                    |
|--|---|
| Employee integration   | Relationship interferes with work                         |
| Reduction in turnover  | Tension when unfairness perceived                         |
| Improved organizational communication  | Difficult to terminate relationship                       |
| Management development   | Barrier to communication                                  |
| Managerial succession  | Role identification between mentor protégé and supervisor |
| Productivity   |   |
| Socialization to power   |   |
| Increased employee motivation  |   |
| Improved productivity  |   |
| Increased organizational commitment  |   |
| On-the-job training  |   |
| Identification of talent   |   |
| Decreased employee isolation   |   |
| Increased internal labor pool for promotions   |   |
| Integrates employees into corporate culture  |   |
| Summarized from Allen, Poteet, & Burroughs, 1997; Baum, 1992; Eby, 1997; Fagenson-Eland, et al., 1997; Hunt & Michael, 1983; Hegstad, 2002; Wanberg, et al., 2003. |   |

### Summary of the Review of Literature

My intentions for Chapter II were to give an in-depth review of the mentoring literature and the theoretical foundations that support human development and interaction that occur in mentoring relationships. By understanding the history of mentoring relationships, a strong basis was set for its importance in developing individuals today. The seminal work of Kram's mentoring functions was outlined, which helps to explain how mentoring relationships work. A thorough discussion of the outcomes of mentoring relationships for the protégé, the mentor, and the organization provides a context for how mentoring benefits all parties involved.

In addition, a review of HRD was provided to understand HRD's use of mentoring relationships in developing individuals and organizations. HRD practitioners need to understand where mentoring should be utilized in developing individuals and improving organizations. A brief discussion on executive development allowed for an understanding of how mentoring is related to developing senior corporate leaders. The current review of literature provides a foundation to the current study of understanding CEOs as mentors and protégés.

Wanberg, et al. (2003) stated, "Research has advanced our understanding of the benefits as well as drawbacks of mentoring relationships and has delved further into related and important branches of research" (p. 112). However, Wanberg et al. and Noe (1988), agreed that a great deal of research has been conducted on mentoring in the last decade, but that the literature on mentoring relationships is still very young. There is much work to be done.

### CHAPTER III

#### METHODOLOGY

The literature informs us that qualitative research is best utilized when the topic of understanding the experience of people is being explored (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000). Qualitative research is concerned with experiences as they “are ‘lived’ or ‘felt’ or ‘undergone’ ” (Sherman & Webb, 1988, p. 7). Merriam (1998) explained that qualitative researchers are “interested in understanding the meaning people have constructed, that is how they make sense of their world and the experiences they have in the world” (p. 6).

In this chapter, I will explore the basic concepts of qualitative research and establish how the current study follows the framework throughout. The basic conceptual guidelines and understandings came from Merriam’s (1998) book *Qualitative Research and Case Study Applications in Education*. Her book helps clarify the breadth and depth of qualitative research.

Qualitative research acts as an umbrella covering several forms of inquiry that help to describe and explain the meaning of social phenomena with as little disruption of the natural setting as possible (Merriam, 1998). Merriam, identified the key basic assumption of all qualitative research as the view that “realities are constructed by individuals interacting with their social worlds” (Merriam, 1998, p. 6). Merriam discussed how, “qualitative research assumes that meaning is embedded in people’s experiences and that this meaning is mediated through the investigator’s own perceptions” (Merriam, 1998, p. 6). The experiences of CEOs in mentoring relationships will be explored in this chapter.

Two other characteristics of all qualitative research are that the “researcher is the primary instrument for data collection and analysis and that the research involves fieldwork” (Merriam, 1998, p. 7). I interviewed 15 CEOs in person and in so doing became the instrument of this study. In order for me to observe the CEOs in their natural setting, the interviews occurred face-to-face in the executives’ offices. A broad interview protocol was used:

- 1) Tell me how you got to be where you are (a CEO)?
- 2) Who were the people (mentors) that helped you along the way?
- 3) How do you develop (mentor) others?
- 4) What characteristics do you look for in individuals you develop?

The fourth concept to which I adhered was that qualitative research focuses on “process, meaning, and understanding, the product of qualitative study is richly descriptive” (Merriam, 1998, p. 8). I described the context and the people, using their own words and my interpretation of what the CEOs meant.

With the basic understandings of the qualitative approach, I will now share how the methodology for this study is informed by Moustakas (1994) *Phenomenological Research Methods*. Because my topic of mentoring relationships has a shallow research base, especially from the perspective of the CEO, my purpose is to gain a deep and comprehensive understanding of CEOs’ experiences in mentoring relationships. There are a number of ways to approach the analysis. Moustakas wrote the aim of his analysis as, “to determine what an experience means for the persons who have had the experience and are able to provide a comprehensive description of it” (p. 13). This worldview

espouses that individuals involved in any given situation construct reality based on their own particular experience (Sztucinski, 2001). Sztucinski (2001), in her doctoral research, outlined the core assumptions regarding the nature of reality from the phenomenological approach. These assumptions are very similar for all qualitative research. The qualitative research literature informs us of the following assumptions, which have been summarized by Sztucinski (2001):

- The purpose of the research is to better understand the social phenomenon from the participant's perspective (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).
- The research question(s) is focused on the descriptions of what people experience (Merriam, 1998).
- The data can be best and most accurately obtained through interactive, in-depth inquiry (Seidman, 1998).
- Understanding and meaning is the immediate purpose of the research rather than applicability to a larger population (LeCompte & Preissle, 1993).
- The researcher is the primary instrument in data collection rather than an inanimate mechanism (Patton, 1990).
- The researcher values understanding, relevance, and diligence, more than control and predication (Patton, 1990).
- The researcher embraces the naturalistic assumption that reality is based on multiple perceptions and interpretations of individual actors (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

In this study, the questions of what are, or have been the experiences of CEOs as protégés and as mentors is focused on understanding the experience, not the outcomes.

Although each of the experiences are different, these experiences can be ordered and arranged to construct meaning from them. According to Merriam (1998) the aim is “to arrive at structural descriptions of an experience, the underlying and precipitating factors that account for what is being experienced” (p. 159).

### Sample

The purpose of the study is to better understand mentoring relationships through the experiences of CEOs as both mentor and protégé. Thus, purposeful sampling was utilized to identify potential participants. Merriam (1998) stated, “purposeful sampling is based on the assumption that the investigator wants to discover, understand, and gain insight and, therefore, must select a sample from which the most can be learned” (p. 61). The population of the study includes CEOs of large organizations. I believe CEOs are perceived as successful and as having done something right to have reached the top decision making seat. Although there is research on executive development, there is limited research specifically on CEO development and none which I can find examining mentoring and CEOs. It was important for me to be purposeful in selecting the participants of the study in order to ensure they are representative of the breadth experience (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000). Criterion were established to directly reflect the purpose of the study and guide in the identification of information-rich participants (Merriam, 1998). The following were criteria for participation in the study:

- All participants had to be chief decision-making officers in their organization.
- The participants had to be willing to engage in a face-to-face interview for at least an hour.

- The participants had to be willing to share their experiences.
- The participants had to oversee large organizations.
- The participants had to represent a variety of industries.
- Through the participants, I tried to achieve a gender mix, age mix, and race mix.

Identification of these individuals was obtained through people I knew who also knew CEOs. The mutual acquaintances provided the initial contact which I followed up to secure the interview. Because qualitative research emphasizes quality over quantity (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000), I chose to interview fifteen people. Twelve of the fifteen met the criteria for the study and five of the twelve were key informants providing a more in-depth understanding of the CEOs' experiences. Women have not yet reached the level of CEO in many large organizations making it difficult to identify females to participate in the study. The latest study by Catalyst (2004) identified only sixteen of Fortune 1000 CEOs were women, of that sixteen only eight led in Fortune 500 companies.

#### Data Collection

My experience with the data collection was much different than described in *Studying Elites Using Qualitative Methods* (Hertz & Imber, 1995). In fact, had I read this book prior to my study, I might have changed the population as one of the first lines stated "The difficulties associated with getting access and data ought to serve as caution to the aspiring students of business elites" (p. 6). Useem (1995) stated "gaining access can be a tough proposition, even when the points of getting in is innocuous, well-intentioned, or attractive to key people in the organization itself" (p. 4). I did not have

any problems getting access to the CEOs. By using mutual and well respected contacts the doors to the CEOs were opened.

Between the months of February and April 2004, I interviewed fifteen CEOs, of which twelve were most able to inform the research questions under examination and five of the twelve were key informants. A letter was sent by a mutual connection (See Appendix A) along with a letter from me (See Appendix B) explaining the details of the research. I then contacted each CEOs' assistant and e-mailed them a copy of my letter and the consent form. Understanding the power of the gatekeeper is critical. I wanted them to understand why I was asking for the CEOs' time. Useem (1995) found that, "most businesses, no matter how small, have gatekeepers who keep an eye on the comings and goings of strangers" (p. 5). Useem (1995) advised that in order to get the most out of the interview, the researcher should meet the CEOs at a time and in a place that is convenient to them.

Ten of the interviews occurred in Texas, either Dallas, Houston, or San Antonio. Five interviews were in California. Each interview occurred in the CEO's office. Details were observed about their workspace and the "feel" of their office environment (i.e. the way others treated me and the way others treated the CEO). Of the fifteen interviews, two of the CEOs were in the retail business, four were in the energy business, one was in construction, two were in banking and investments, one was in real estate, two were in defense, and three in transportation. In addition, all participants were Caucasian. This is representative of the majority of CEOs today, as 71% of all CEOs in the United States



are white males (United States Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2003). Each CEO who was contacted agreed to participate.

Each interview lasted between one hour and one and one-half hours. Although Useem (1995) warned that the researcher might only get half the time allotted and even then it will be interrupted, my experiences with each CEO were quite different. The CEOs gave me at least the time allotted, if not more. Each participant signed the consent form approved by the Texas A&M University Institutional Review Board (See Appendix C), which I sent ahead of the interview, thereby allowing the CEOs sufficient time to review the document. Two of the CEOs confirmed that in no way would they or their companies be identifiable, making it clear they wanted to be kept confidential. Because confidentiality is of utmost importance, I assured them that in no way would anyone be able to identify them. I have given all participants pseudonyms, and no documentation identifies the participants or their organizations by their real names. Following each interview, a note of thanks was sent to each participant and to each of their assistants.

My general goal of the interviews was to allow the CEOs to tell me their stories—how did they reach their current position. I wanted to hear from their perspectives those moments that were memorable along their journey and if there were significant people connected to those moments. Moustakas (1994) and Sztucinski (2001) suggested that an open-ended question interview approach allowed the interviewer to be brought into the lives of individuals in order to understand their experiences. Being open to where the CEO directed the interview, I inserted probing questions where appropriate. Being able to allow silence and let the person be in the moment was difficult at times, but in the

end, each participant opened up and shared their story with me. About forty minutes into the interview, I transitioned and asked the CEOs to describe how they have helped to develop others. This brought about contemplation and often silence before the CEO began identifying young professionals with whom they saw potential.

There were two foundational questions that guided my open discussion with the CEOs. The two core questions included:

- How did you get where you are, and who were those that influenced (mentored) your development?
- How do you develop (mentor) others, and what do you look for in those individuals whom you develop?

Several of the CEOs were not familiar or comfortable with the word mentor and often used other nouns to describe either the people who mentored them or those whom they had mentored. Because the CEOs did not necessarily understand the broad definition of the word mentor, I allowed them to use the verbiage with which they felt most comfortable. I tape recorded every interview except two and also made field notes that included observations of the office space and body language the recording could not identify (I did not record two of the CEOs because I did not want to interrupt our initial conversation. Instead, it was more natural for me to take notes). A third party, who agreed to the terms of confidentiality, transcribed the tapes of the recorded interviews. After receiving the transcriptions, I reviewed the tapes to ensure that each detail was included in the transcription; including pauses, “ums” and “ahs,” in addition to incomplete thoughts. After editing the transcriptions and bringing the format and style

into uniformity, I bracketed observations of the conversational behaviors and made note of emphases the participants made. In addition, I sent each CEO a copy of their transcription for a member check to ensure the information was correct and intentional (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Following the initial analysis it was necessary for me to contact three of the five CEOs who had been key informants to the framework that was emerging from the study. Informants are described by Merriam (1998) as “one who understands the culture but is also able to reflect on it and articulate for the researcher what is going on” (p. 85). Key informants are somewhat able to understand the stance of the investigator, becoming a “valuable guide in unfamiliar territory” (Merriam, 1998, p. 85). I called each of the three CEOs’ assistants and asked them to have the CEOs call me when they had a few free moments. All three CEOs called me back within two hours and were happy to expand on their experiences. The phone conversations lasted several minutes and each conversation provided further insight into my study.

### Data Analysis

The data analysis was exciting and was done in accordance with qualitative practice. As Colaizzi (1978) explained “These research procedures of analysis that are employed should be viewed only as typical, and are by no means definitive” (p. 59). The analysis was determined after reviewing several dissertations and two primary sources, Moustakas (1994) and Colaizzi (1978). Both Moustakas (1994) and Colaizzi (1978) laid out a clear analysis plan that made sense and helped me capture the CEOs experiences. Before beginning the interviews, I reflected on my own perspectives and preconceived

ideas. Knowing that everyone comes to a situation with predispositions, so did I come to this study with mine. I identified my preconceived ideas and wrote them down as assumptions. Moustakas (1994) described this process of epoche as “setting aside prejudgments and opening the research interview with an unbiased, receptive presence” (p. 180). I did set my assumptions aside during the interviews and analysis in order to truly see what was being said by the CEOs. I attempted, however, to reflect on my preconceptions during analysis and used them to help me understand the lens through which I made this journey. To understand how views changed throughout the interview process, a third party, my dissertation advisor, interviewed me to help me understand my own voice and to recognize how my assumptions had changed. My perspectives did change as I experienced the CEOs’ mentoring relationships, because I began to see the CEOs’ experiences through their eyes. Something that was once far away was near, making their experiences more clear.

The fundamental steps of the analysis included:

1. Upon completing the fifteen interviews, interview tapes were transcribed. The amount of data that needed to be analyzed was overwhelming. One by one, I read the transcriptions very carefully along with my field notes of the interviews. This helped me recreate the entire interview in my mind. The transcriptions (also known as protocols) were reviewed in order to acquire a feeling for them, a “making sense out of them” (Colaizzi, 1978, p. 59). Occasionally I listened to the tapes a second time to ensure that I understood the tone, the mood, and the feelings of the CEO. My field notes were incorporated into the protocol to help

establish an overall understanding of the CEO's experience as it was shared with me. It was rather easy to take myself back to each office and relive the experience, because each CEO was unique and made strong impressions.

2. After I re-familiarized myself with the interviews and the experiences each CEO shared, I began to cull out information that was not relevant to understanding the CEO's experiences as mentor and as protégé. The significant statements or horizons (Moustakas, 1994) are those statements that were integral to the CEOs' description of mentoring relationships. Statements that were unrelated or repetitive were eliminated and set aside. Extracting significant statements eliminates repetition and unnecessary information from the analysis (Colaizzi, 1978). Each of the remaining significant statements is a necessary constituent for understanding the participant's experiences (Moustakas, 1994). Recognizing that every statement has equal value is called horizontalization (Colaizzi, 1978; Moustakas, 1994). At first, this step was difficult, because I felt everything said by the CEOs was important. However, because my first question asked, "How did you get where you are?", there were statements that did not relate to their mentoring relationships. I closely reviewed each story and every statement, determined relevance to the study, and made sure the statement was necessary in understanding the CEOs' experiences. Once I got started, the significant statements began to stand out. There were two groupings of significant statements—those that described the CEO's experience as a protégé and those that described the CEO's experience as a mentor. The significant statements were

more easily determined from the CEO's descriptions of themselves as a mentor, because I asked them a more direct question leading to those descriptions.

3. All of the protocols had significant statements extracted and recorded in a table, and repetitive or irrelevant statements were eliminated.
4. There were two groups of significant statements per protocol, those describing the CEOs' experiences as a protégé and those describing the CEOs' experiences as a mentor. It was hard to move to the next step of formulating meanings. So, I decided to look at the various functions and roles that were evident in the experiences described. I added a column to the table of significant statements and labeled, where appropriate, the various roles and functions that were identifiable in the CEOs' experiences. This made step six much easier and allowed me to discover the significance of what was being said.
5. In order to complete the member checks (Lincoln & Guba, 1985), all CEOs were sent a copy of the significant statements from our discussion and were asked to review and confirm the accuracy of what they intended to say. Seven of the CEOs responded, all six said they agreed, and a few expanded on some of their comments providing more information.
6. After immersing myself in the significant statements, I formulated meanings for each of the significant statements, transferring the CEOs' words to formulated meanings. These meanings were formulated to determine living descriptions or highlights of the experience (Moustakas, 1994). A formulated meaning is a simple statement or phrase developed by the researcher that reflects the essential

meaning of the significant statement identified earlier in the process (Colaizzi, 1978). Colaizzi (1978) stated, “Here the researcher is involved in that ineffable thing known as creative insights; he must leap from what his subjects say to what they mean” (Colaizzi, 1978, p. 59). This involves the human capacity to move from a statement to its referent (Sztucinski, 2001) and involves re-describing someone’s experience from a different perspective. I determined the meanings by reading and reflecting on the significant statements and then asking, “what is the underlying meaning of the statement within the whole context of the CEO’s experience in mentoring relationships?” I tried to simply state the meaning of each CEOs’ statements and not sever the connection with the original text.

I also identified the mentoring functions described in the CEOs’ experiences with their mentors. Mentoring functions are those aspects of a developmental relationship “that enhance both individuals’ growth and advancement” (Kram, 1983, p. 622). Both career development and psychosocial mentoring functions are the essential characteristics that differentiate the mentoring relationships and define the type of development an individual will receive from their mentor. Next, I determined what functions the CEOs might have provided as mentors. However, as will be discussed later in this chapter, that was not easily accomplished. Formulated meanings were constructed for all interviews and their significant statements (See Appendix D).

7. The formulated meanings for all CEOs were examined, and similar or closely related statements were clustered together to form themes. The challenge is to

allow for the emergence of themes that are common to all of the subjects' protocols (Colaizzi, 1978). The difficulty exists in shifting from formulated meanings to the themes found within them. This step allowed for the emergence of the essential elements of the CEO's experience with mentoring relationships. Many statements were naturally aligned with the two known mentoring functions, psychosocial and career development, and were clustered accordingly. After analysis, a third set of statements were determined to be a theme representing the relational elements of mentoring relationships.

8. In order to validate the themes, I first went back to the original protocols and made sure there was nothing in the protocols that could not be accounted for in the themes. Also, I had three external reviewers confirm my work. The major advisor of the study, another professor and committee member, and a colleague and administrator, each reviewed key components of the analysis. Reviewing the significant statements and formulated meanings together created good questions and great conversation. The overall feeling from all three reviewers was that the themes and essential elements were a good representation of the study.
9. Although separate themes emerged, it is important to understand that the themes combine to create a holistic understanding of all the CEOs' experiences as a mentor and as a protégé. The themes transcended all the experience of the CEOs. They co-exist and support the entire experience as described by the CEO.
10. Last, I wrote a general structure integrating the essential elements into a description that validated aspects of the current literature and introduced a



relational component that emerged from the experiences. A framework was developed to illustrate the experiences of the CEOs as protégés. In order to insure the framework represented the CEOs experience, three follow-up interviews were conducted over the phone with key informants. The second interview helped to expand and clarify on the themes that had emerged.

### Trustworthiness

Ensuring validity and reliability in a qualitative study involves conducting the investigation in a trustworthy manner (Merriam, 1998). The credibility, transferability, dependability, and the confirmability of the study are the basic ways in which trustworthiness is built into the research. Merriam (1998) explained that regardless of the type of research, validity and reliability or trustworthiness could be achieved through (1) careful attention to the study's conceptualization, (2) the way the data are collected, analyzed, and interpreted, and (3) the way the findings are presented.

In contrast to the positivistic paradigm, the underlying assumption of constructionist epistemology is that the research and participant are interrelated rather than independent from one another (Guba, 1981). Merriam (1998) explained the assumption underlying qualitative research is that "...reality is holistic, multidimensional, and ever-changing; it is not a single, fixed, objective phenomenon waiting to be discovered, observed and measured as in quantitative research" (p. 202). Sztucinski (2001) stated, "Phenomenological researchers employ themselves as instruments of study and willingly trade off some objectivity and reliability in the positivist sense in order to have greater flexibility and the opportunity to build upon tacit

knowledge” (p. 88). However, Merriam (1998) and Moustakas (1994) both suggest that phenomenological researchers can take steps to ensure trustworthiness.

To ensure trustworthiness, I used several strategies including:

1. I spent time reflecting and “bracketing” my own biases (Colaizzi, 1974), allowing me to put aside any preconceived ideas of what might be said and what the CEOs’ experiences might have been. By clarifying my assumptions and worldviews prior to the study, I made the reader aware of some potential universal assumptions (Merriam, 1998).
2. Throughout the interview, I allowed the CEOs to respond naturally and lead the conversation where I perceived they wanted it directed. I did not lead them with questions that might affect their answers. Instead, I asked very open questions and allowed them to discuss what they felt important.
3. Member checks were performed following the interview. A transcript was sent to the CEO in order for them to conclude that what was intended to be said was actually said and whether any corrections needed to be made. Member checks are necessary to give the research credibility (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).
4. In order to ensure trustworthiness, the researcher must answer the questions, “Would another reader see what I saw?” I often took a step back and asked myself if what I found reflected the actual experiences of the CEOs? I looked for alternate interpretations and went back to the original protocols to confirm that the meanings I had formulated actually represented everything that was being said.

5. I incorporated three other peoples' perspectives to ensure both the methodology and the findings made sense. Using colleagues to examine the findings and verify that I was on track helped to ensure the trustworthiness of the study.

These five steps are basic strategies to ensure the quality of a my study (Merriam, 1998; Erlandson et al., 1993; Moustakas, 1994; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The principle outcome of qualitative studies is to increase knowledge by extending understanding rather than the quantitative goal of generalizing results (Sztucinski, 2001). By understanding the experiences of CEOs as mentors and as protégés, the literature on mentoring relationships will be expanded.

#### Ethical Considerations

Ethical principles were considered throughout all phases of the study. In qualitative studies, ethical dilemmas are likely to emerge with regard to the collection of data and in the dissemination of the findings (Merriam, 1998). Every attempt should be made to safeguard the participants' interest, especially in dealing with high profile people such as CEOs.

To ensure the CEOs were protected, I made a promise to each regarding the confidentiality of the data and the anonymity of the CEOs and those whom they mentioned throughout our discussion. In terms of data confidentiality, I promised that the professional transcriber and I would be the only ones to hear the audiotapes. In addition, the verbatim transcripts would only be read by myself and committee chair. I assured them that the tapes, as well as the transcripts, would be kept secured.

All CEO names, the people they discussed, and any company's name have been changed, and only I know the true identity. This was very important to several participants. These assurances helped the CEOs understand that they could speak freely and honestly with me about their experiences, and I believe each CEO trusted me enough to do so.

### Summary of Research Procedures

Purposive sampling was used to identify CEOs that represented a cross section of the current CEO population. The result was fifteen CEOs from organizations, most of which had at least 500 employees. The process included an hour to an hour and a half, semi-structured interview with each CEO. The primary focus of the questions were directed towards the CEOs' experiences as a mentor and as a protégé. A second phone interview was conducted with three CEOs who provided deeper insight to the study.

The focus of this study and the strengths of qualitative research methodology combined to validate the appropriateness of the phenomenological research approach. I have described the process and identified my efforts to ensure the study's trustworthiness. Also included was my approach in considering the ethical principles that the CEOs deserved.

The analysis included extracting the significant statements from the interview transcriptions and identifying the mentoring functions and roles that were present in the experiences described by the CEOs. I formulated meanings for each of the significant statements and was able to group the meanings into themes. Member checks were used

throughout the process to ensure the trustworthiness of the study. The process allowed me the ability to interpret the experiences of the CEOs as mentors and protégés.

## CHAPTER IV

### FINDINGS

The purpose of this chapter is to present the findings from an analysis of qualitative data provided through interviews with fifteen CEOs. The experience of analyzing the data was engaging and yet challenging at times, because I wanted to ensure that my understanding of the CEOs' voices was accurate. I presented the findings starting with the experiences of the CEOs as protégés. All of the CEOs' experiences as protégés were through informal mentoring relationships. Three themes emerged, two of which align with Kram's (1988) research on functions. The other theme provided a deeper understanding of the emotional and relational connection between mentor and protégé. Thick description was provided to support the themes. At the end of CEOs as protégés section, a framework was introduced that provides an image of how mentoring relationships develop.

The second part of this chapter is on CEOs as mentors. As described in chapter II, the research focused on mentors is limited. Because the data is not rich, the findings are not presented by theme, but rather by grouping the characteristics of the relationships.

Kram's two mentoring functions are what distinguishes mentoring from other non-developmental work relationships (Mullen, 1998), and much of what was described by the CEOs supported Kram's findings. I did not begin this study to validate Kram's research. The presence of mentoring functions, however, was so evident that it was only

natural to include the functions, career development and psychosocial, from Kram's research in my analysis.

I began by discussing the themes in the context of the career development function, followed by the psychosocial function. Each role of the functions was explained and reinforced through the CEOs' experiences as protégés. Next, the third theme, relational elements was introduced and clear examples were provided from the CEOs' description of their mentoring relationships. A framework was developed that explains how some of the mentoring relationships between the CEOs' and their mentors develop into a more meaningful and purposeful developmental relationship. A simplified, fictitious example was used to explain the complexity of the framework.

In the final section of Chapter IV, I provide a description of the CEOs as mentors. It was difficult for the CEOs to describe their experiences as a mentor, however, I was able to identify the characteristics of the relationships. A brief discussion is provided on the relational elements the CEOs intended to have with their protégés.

#### CEOs as Protégés

##### *Career Development Function*

The career development function is the aspect of the mentoring relationship that enhances the protégés' ability to learn in an organization and prepares the protégés for advancement (Kram, 1985). The career development function is made possible by the knowledge and position of the mentor. In the context of mentoring relationships, the career development function is associated with benefits to career development and advancement of protégés. There are five roles within the career development function,

all of which provided themes for much of the CEO's experience. The career development function includes: sponsorship exposure and visibility; coaching; protection; and challenging assignments (Kram, 1988). Each function is defined below, followed by a presentation of related themes from this study.

### *Sponsorship*

The role of sponsorship includes actively nominating an individual for a lateral move or for a promotion. Kram (1985) stated, "During the early stage of an organizational career, sponsorship helps a newcomer build a reputation, become known, and obtain job opportunities that prepare him or her for higher level positions" (p. 26). Sponsorship is also seen later in one's career when he or she is nominated for a promotion, and a mentor helps the protégé achieve a position. Although none of the CEOs in my study used the phrase, "my mentor sponsored me" several of the CEOs did mention that they ascended to a position because of the help their mentor provided. A mentor may actively nominate a person for a certain promotion or position. It could; however, be as subtle as the protégé having a one-on-one conversation with the mentor to discuss strategic advancement and opportunities. Kram (1988) claimed that without sponsorship, there is a high probability that an individual will be overlooked for a promotion regardless of his or her ability.

Almost all of the CEOs had experienced various levels of sponsorship. It was interesting that instead of recognizing the role the mentor had played, all but one mentioned that luck had a lot to with the advancement. After analyzing the twelve interviews, I concluded that being in the right place at the right time was an important



part of the protégés' success in becoming a CEO. I was persuaded that the CEOs would not have been in the right place at the right time without their mentors' involvement.

George described a situation early in his military career when he was selected by his mentor.

There were two key job openings and there were three of us to choose from. He [George's mentor] agonized a lot over which two of the three were going to get these two jobs. He did not have to show that, but he did. It impressed me that he took such an interest in me.

George remembered how difficult it was for the senior officer (mentor) to make the decision of who to slot for the promotion and George appreciated the officer letting the three candidates see the struggle. George reported that he was very humbled by being chosen. He did; however, mention that all three potential candidates turned out to be very successful.

Roger discussed a time during the middle of his career when the company where he was a vice-president was going to be purchased. With change can come uncertainty. For Roger however, his concerns were assuaged by his mentor. Roger's mentor provided sponsorship and told Roger not to worry because Roger would be taken care of and would get to work where he wanted. "My mentor was very happy with me and he said, 'Roger, which company do you want to go to work for and we'll just, you know, work the deal out that way'."

Another area where we see sponsorship is when someone is starting his or her own business and people invest in the company and in doing so, invest in the person.

Barry mentions one of his strongest influences came from someone who wanted to see Barry's new business succeed. "He was kind of investing in me and not my ideas. He said 'I do not know what you are going to do, but I will give you this ten thousand dollars and whatever you do, I would like to invest in it.' " By sponsoring him financially, Barry's mentor provided both the monetary and the personal support Barry needed to go out and start an organization that is now a Fortune 100 company.

The following situation shared with me by Nelson, is an excellent example of sponsorship, one in which we see a mentor helping a young professional's career take off:

So, one day I got a call from the chairman and the president, and they said, 'We want to have lunch with you some time today.' So, I went, I had had a lot of social contact with them and a lot of business contact with them, but it was not a customary thing for them to call me for lunch. They basically said, 'the CFO for the holding company has severe health issues and he has been out,' and of course I had followed all of that for six or nine months, and we were getting behind. The economic circumstances of those times were when we had the worst inflation in my lifetime...So, it was a challenging time, and we were not doing our financing and keeping up to date, because our CFO was sort of disabled, and Henry who was our chairman at the time said, 'I want you to be the CFO.' I am from the smallest subsidiary, and I am a lawyer engineer, and I am sort of faking it down there, and I told him, 'Henry, I am flattered

beyond what you can expect. I mean that is a great honor, and I cannot tell you how much I appreciate it, but I do not think that I am qualified.'

And it was one of the three times that he got mad at me, and I had worked with him for a long time...and he said, 'By golly, I will be the judge of that.' 'Yes, sir.'...So, I did. I became the CFO in my thirties, late thirties, of a Fortune 500 company.

This relatively young man, at the time, was hand selected by someone he refers to as his mentor. It was a defining moment in his career and set Nelson up for advancement to CEO. During our conversation I could tell that Nelson was still, after many years, amazed by the decision that made him CFO of the holding company. His surprise was better understood when he shared that he had only had two finance classes and one accounting class in college. One can truly sense the appreciation Nelson has for the opportunity he was given by his mentor.

An interesting factor associated with sponsorship is the amount of risk the mentors took: appointing a young professional with little financial experience as CFO, investing \$10,000 in a person, and choosing among three qualified young officers for a promotion. From the perspective of the protégés, the mentors trusted their instincts enough to move the protégés into higher level positions. If these protégés had not performed well, it could have been detrimental to the mentors' careers.

Two relational elements, obligation and appreciation, are woven throughout the sponsorship described. These relational elements helped to ensure the protégés would do a good job. The protégés felt a sense of responsibility to their mentors. The protégés did

not want to let their mentors down. The protégés rose to the expectation that was set for them by their mentors. Nelson provides an example of this relational element as he described his approach to his new CFO responsibility. Nelson stated, “I was young, I was energetic, I worked hard, and I was willing to do about anything, because I figured that that was the way that you learned.” Nelson is describing himself when he was selected CFO: he was determined not to fail; he was going to learn; and he was going to do whatever it took to figure out how to be successful. The feeling of appreciation and obligation towards the mentors were the driving factors in the CEOs pushing forward to success. The appreciation is mutual, not only does the protégé appreciate the opportunity, the mentor appreciates and anticipates the protégé’s successful work.

Obligation and appreciation create a desire to succeed. The mentors were talented at selecting the people qualified for positions and those with the skills needed to succeed. In addition, the protégés had a drive to succeed and take hold of the opportunity given. The responsibility the protégés felt towards their mentors solidified their success.

### *Exposure & Visibility*

The role in which mentors allow protégés to demonstrate competence and performance in an organization is known as exposure-and-visibility (Kram, 1988). Exposure-and-visibility serves as a socializing force and helps the protégé gain the exposure needed for advancement. It also exposes protégés to areas of a job or levels in an organization to which they can aspire. Kram (1985) also found that the exposure-and-visibility function “not only makes an individual visible to others who may influence his

organizational fate, but it also exposes the individual to future opportunities” (p. 27).

Exposure and visibility was demonstrated in a variety of CEOs’ experiences.

George was replacing Terry, a long time employee of the company, and was sent to work with Terry a few months before Terry left. Instead of being resentful for being replaced, George described Terry as one of his mentors because Terry took George around and provided him exposure. “He let me run my business, and then he encouraged me and took me around town. He did everything that you would probably want a person to do for you as they are leaving.” George’s mentor exposed George to the business and physically took him around the company, but also around the community to ensure that George was being seen and was seeing the right people. In addition to exposure-and-visibility, I am sure that some of the political bureaucracy of the organization was shared during this time. Exposing the protégé to inside information provides the protégé with a closer look at how the organization works and can ease the protégé’s transition into a new organization.

Nelson provides us with a strong example of exposure-and-visibility when describing an experience very early in his career. Nelson was the executive assistant to Lee, the president of a subsidiary company. Nelson admired and looked up to Lee in many aspects of the business and describes many times when Lee provided exposure and made him visible to different parts and people of the company.

We had a lot of time in those days, and my office was next to his, and we had heavy metal doors with brass fixtures, and there was this cloudy glass on the door between his office and my office, and he would come bang

that door and open it in the morning, and he would say, 'Let's go get a cup of coffee.' He did not say, 'Would you like to get a cup of coffee?' He said, 'let's go.' So, I would go, but I learned a lot from him, and I think that he tried, he had a number I am sure of young people that he tried to mentor. I think that he was trying to see who the next comers were, who was out there that he could promote. He was looking to see how he could organize his business. So, he was looking to promote people, and to develop people, and so I spent a lot of time with him, and it was very beneficial to work as a staff assistant to somebody at that level, because when he went to the field, I went to the field. When he went to check on a project, I went to check on that project, and when he would visit with somebody from outside, sometimes I would sit in, and I would draft letters for him. I learned a lot.

The mentor in this story did not merely try to provide an opportunity, rather he gave Nelson no choice but to see and be seen. Three of the CEOs described mentors that did not physically provide exposure and make them visible, but instead gave them advice on where to go and what to do to be seen. In all three cases, the mentor encouraged the CEOs to get involved in philanthropic and community opportunities. Howard tells about his mentor, "He really helped me and told me to get involved, get involved in philanthropic, community organizations. I joined these organizations and have a strong network of other successful people." Knowing where to go to network

with people can make business easier and provide opportunities for both professional and personal growth.

From the perspectives of the CEOs the pride that is shown by the mentors for their protégés and the pride that the protégés have for their mentors is communicated throughout their experiences. The mentors had such pride in their protégés that they wanted to show them off and provide the protégés with visibility and exposure. In return, the protégés feel pride in their mentors and want to perform well for them. A sense of confidence is placed in both parties; confidence about themselves and confidence in the other person. Howard expressed his confidence and pride for his mentor by stating, “He cared about me and my talents, and I was glad he saw potential in me. I was proud to be seen with him and joined the organizations he recommended.”

Kram (1988) recognized the potential success exposure-and-visibility could have for both the protégé and the mentor. Exposure-and-visibility facilitates “a young manager’s entry into higher ranks of an organization” (Kram, 1985, p.28). Furthermore, it reflects well on the mentor’s choices about who to support and who to make highly visible. Although exposure-and-visibility can take time, the outcomes can be very rewarding.

### *Coaching*

Coaching is a third contribution to the career development of protégés. Coaching “...enhances the junior person’s knowledge and understanding of how to navigate effectively in the corporate world” (Kram, 1988, p. 28). Early in a career, coaching takes the form of a mentor providing advice on requirements and organization hierarchy. In

later career stages, coaching provides access to needed information and a connection to important parts of the organization. Coaching involves sharing knowledge and providing feedback to ensure the protégé is developing in the organization. An element of coaching is sharing knowledge about people, power, and structure, much of which is political. Scandura (1992) provided evidence that more information on the culture of an organization is shared through mentoring relationships than in any other way.

I saw coaching throughout every CEO's experience as protégé. Feedback was one of the most common aspects of the mentoring relationships. George described a time when a senior officer in the military took him aside and provided him direct feedback on his attitude. George's mentor told him, "You know you have a lot of potential. That is what it is, potential, you aren't there yet. You need to understand that you are not there yet." This made an even stronger impression, because the officer who did this was not George's commanding officer, instead he commanded a different company but noticed what George could be.

I got to thinking about what he said, because he talked some pretty harsh words about, well, you just sat down and you did not think that you were going to make it to tomorrow. And I thought, that guy did not have to do that. It was not his job, and he was not my commanding officer, but I have never forgot that he took an interest in something that he could see that maybe he could take the edge off, because I could do so much better if I changed some of my characteristics.

The overarching theme among the coaching interactions of the CEOs and their mentor is the honesty in which the mentor provided advice and feedback to the



protégé—almost brutal honesty, but with intentions of helping the protégé. Karl mentioned several mentors who provided him feedback on his appearance. “One of my mentors told me to trim my fingernails. And that had an impact.” Forty years later, I observed that his hands were manicured and kept in immaculate condition. He had an almost unconscious awareness of his hands. During the interview, he got an ink spot on a fingernail and continued to wipe at the nail until the spot was gone. Another of his mentors sent him to get his teeth straightened, again reinforcing the importance of appearance. It was apparent that for many of the CEOs this kind of honest advice can be difficult to handle. Several CEOs shook their heads and took a deep breath when describing the brutally honest feedback.

Roger and Tom actually used the words coach in addition to honesty and trust when describing their primary mentors. Roger told the story:

Jimmy decided that if he picked me he’s now gonna invest in me. Jimmy always treated me...he never directed me to do anything, we had regular meetings, a lot of them by phone some in person, that’s the first time I ever had anybody that would have more of a consultant style with me. I would do things that would annoy him to no end, I’d give him lots of information, he’d never tell me that was wrong, or whatever. I could tell by his reaction the things that would annoy him, and he’d say, ‘tell me why you did that,’ and then I’d explain it to him and either he would learn and accept it or support it, or he would then start with other questions. If he knew I was wrong, well he would say, ‘what about this, what do you think about that, how are you going to deal with this?,’ and he started that

process with me. It was really sort of this educational process, we'd sit down we'd talk about people, he'd say 'Roger, your staff, you have some strengths and some weaknesses, I think in your mind you should think of it as if you have a year to get the kind of staff you want.' He said 'let's go over all the people, tell me about this person, tell me what's good about them, what's bad about them, do you think they're gonna stay, how are you gonna tell,' you know that was his style with me so if you talk about mentoring, that's really the first time in my life ever that anybody... I had absolute trust in this person. Jimmy had absolute trust in me and again, it was sort of this, just the way he coached with me, worked with me, he encouraged me to always figure out ways I could do things better, but he believed in me and he put up with the things I'd screw up.

In many cases when the mentor coached their protégé, it was done in a questioning manner, much like Roger described in his experience. Instead of giving the protégé the answer, the mentor would guide the protégé to the right answer or allow the protégé to grow into the right answer. Coaching is a true educational element of mentoring relationships.

Another relational element is the time and attention given to the protégés by their mentors. Teaching takes time, especially when it is done one on one. It takes an unquantifiable amount of attention to communicate effectively, especially listening. Roger describes further the experience he had with Jimmy, "It's actually easier to tell people, and that's probably the least effective thing you can do, you know, ask, find, get into their heads, find out about their thought processes, question them. This takes time

and lots of attention.” It is difficult to hear and read between the lines of what someone is saying, and yet as a mentor it is necessary in order to facilitate the learning process that takes place in coaching.

### *Protection*

Protection shields the protégé from potential damaging contacts or performances that could be detrimental to their advancement (Kram, 1988). Protection can come in many forms and is often seen when the mentor makes sure the protégé does not “mess up.” Because of the position most mentors are in, they can “afford the attention in tough situations and in doing so, protect the other [protégé] from negativity. Protection involves taking credit and blame in controversial situations” (Kram, 1988, p. 29). Protection can also mean that mentors open certain doors for their protégé to ensure that they are taken care of and have an opportunity to grow, as well as, making sure they are not exposed to something or someone harmful in an organization. George described a perfect example of his mentor in the military providing protection and “having a big umbrella” with which to protect him, allowing him to fail without having to “take the heat.”

He taught me a lot, but when I first met him, I worked with him not for him, and actually I was on staff higher than he was. I was lower in rank, but higher on staff, and boy he was tough to deal with, but when you went to work for him, he provided a big umbrella to let you succeed and fail, and he kept people off your back, and he took all of the heat, and let you do your job. What was strange about the whole thing was that, he was big

in artillery command...and he asked me to come down and be his operations officer, which shocked me, because we had knocked heads all of the time, when I was higher on staff than he was, and I said, 'You have got to be kidding.' But he taught me that, one thing is that he saw disagreement as a positive not as a negative. Because, you know, we did not always agree, and that is the reason that we knocked heads. When you worked for him, he was an easy guy to get along with, because he was the only one that you had to answer to. Everybody else he defended you. Even though you may be wrong, he protected you. So, you got the sense that you could fail, and it was ok, because it was just between the two of you. He was going to make sure that you knew you failed, but nobody else got involved.

Protection is not easy for the mentor, the mentors are putting themselves on the line for their protégé. How many times will a mentor allow their protégé to mess up or did the mentor know that their protégé would not let them down? I think Wayne describes the ultimate story of mentoring and protection. Wayne is CEO of a successful company; however, two years ago this company could easily have gone under had it not been for his leadership and his mentor's willingness to make sure his protégé was protected. Wayne actually hired his mentor to come out of retirement and work for him to correct the financial condition of the organization. Wayne's mentor has continued to protect and guide him.

Well, what I need to do here to turn this company around is...I need people that are better than I am...So, last year when I came in, one of the immediate needs was to fix the financial credibility. So, we brought in a new CFO that I trust to take care of that. You know that you have a good mentor and you have got a good relationship, when you are confident enough in your position that your are willing to change levels, they [the protégé] used to work for you [the mentor], and now you [the mentor] are willing to work for them [the protégé]. So, he works for me now, and when you reach that point in sort of the comfort with each other, you know, Carter was willing to come work for me after I had worked for him.

This is one of the most unique mentoring relationships described to me and a clear example of the mentor protecting their protégé. Carter knew the financial reputation of the company his protégé, Wayne, had just taken over. Wayne knew there was only one person he would trust enough to handle the difficult situation. I perceive Carter's willingness to come back to work after retirement and help protect his protégé is a unique situation that demonstrates how much Carter believed in Wayne and cared about his future.

Based on the experiences shared by the CEOs, it was demonstrated that mentors have enough confidence in their protégés to risk their own reputation. Protection supports the protégés and their "career advancement by reducing unnecessary risks that can threaten an emerging reputation and contributes to a senior's reputation by

demonstrating his ability to develop talent for the organization.” (Kram , 1988, p. 30).

Wayne further describes hiring Carter, his mentor,

I knew he could fix the financial organization and restore credibility in our financial numbers, and I knew that he could do that in his sleep, and his other job was that when he gets ready to leave, to have a minimum of two replacement candidates ready. And that is what he is doing.

Carter has gone so far as to find a replacement for himself when he leaves, someone who can come into Wayne’s organization and continue to do a good job. Kram (1988) stated, “Protection that shields a junior person from unnecessary risk or criticism confirms the senior’s ability to positively intervene in a situation where he can use his status and clout in supportive actions for others” (p. 31).

The support and caring shown through protection confirms the belief a mentor has in their protégé and in the protégés ability to succeed. Support and caring are not the only two relational elements demonstrated through protection. Another relational element is the belief a mentor has in the protégé. The mentors believe in the protégés enough to risk themselves and their reputation for the protégés. A parental instinct that Karl described, “he did not have any children, so he kind of took me under his wing and took care of me.” The emotional connectedness the mentors and protégés shared creates an environment where protection is a natural reaction.

### *Challenging Assignments*

Challenging assignments is another role of the career development function that was seen throughout each CEO's experience. Challenging assignments allow the protégé to develop the essential technical and managerial skills through work assignments that encourage learning (Kram, 1985). The mentors will usually play a critical role in designing such work for the protégés to learn effectively. Much like coaching, providing challenging tasks is an educational process and includes support and feedback. Randy has a good, specific example describing his mentor setting up a task and creating the environment where there is room to learn and do better.

When I was a research engineer, he gave me this problem one time, we had this huge project, and he asked me to work on the complete mathematical analysis of it. Well at the time I was taking my master's degree, and one of the courses I was taking was tensor analysis, and tensor analysis was made to order for that project. I said, man I can use this, so I worked hard to beat it, and I got some elegant analysis, and I brought it up to him and he says 'hey, this looks great but let's make a few tests you know, because your analysis covers all conditions let's just say the helicopter sitting on the ground velocity is zero, it's straight and level so the pitch angle is zero, has no rolls, so that's zero,' so we put zeroes in all these terms drop out let's see if it makes sense, well it didn't. I was so embarrassed, I went back, I had one algebraic mistake, and from that point on, everything else was wrong. I corrected it, went through

these little checks, everything's right so I took it back and he says, 'let that be a lesson to you.' And you know it was and now I always have all the engineers that work for me make these in-point analysis, there's always a simple case that you plug it in, that you know the answer...so that was a big mentoring.

I do not think that every example of challenging tasks is so overt. Sometimes it can be in the way the mentors ask questions or what the mentors' expectations are for their protégé.

Bill would challenge you, Bill is intelligent. He is probably one of the more intelligent people I have ever met. I mean, he is brilliant. He is really intelligent. He has got a mind that keeps thousands of facts, and he can recall them. I cannot do that. So, he asks you all types of questions. He is the type of guy that will keep asking you all types of questions until he gets to the one that you cannot answer. He just keeps asking, asking and asking. No matter how many answers you have, it is not enough.

Many times I think the protégés put pressure on themselves and believed it was their mentors challenging them. It is not that their mentors are not challenging them, but the protégés feel undue pressure to succeed and make their protégés proud. There is no specific example of this, but the overall way in which the CEOs would say, "my mentor challenged me" seemed to be something the CEOs felt from themselves. It appeared that even though the mentors did "challenge" the protégés, the protégés also put pressure on themselves to succeed. The pressure came from the protégés' aspiration to do better for



their mentor. Good was not good enough, the CEOs were inspired to do more and in turn challenged themselves to do better.

Challenging work assignments prepare the individual with the skills to take advantage of professional opportunities (Kram, 1988). I conclude that challenging assignments include the relational elements of inspiration and aspiration. Challenging assignments are one way mentors inspire the protégés to do their best. In addition, challenging assignments develop a unique internal pressure or tension that helps the protégé aspire to be successful at the task set before them by their mentor.

### *Psychosocial Function*

The second theme that emerged supports the other mentoring function identified by Kram (1988), psychosocial. Psychosocial development may emerge from a strong interpersonal relationship between the mentor and the protégé and can provide more personal development to the protégé. The personal gain of a higher level of self worth both inside and outside the organization can be a benefit of the psychosocial competencies for the protégé. Personal development is possible because of the interpersonal relationships that foster mutual trust and increasing intimacy in some mentoring relationships (Kram, 1983). The quality of the bond between the mentor and protégé can develop into a strong connection providing the protégé a sense of acceptance and confirmation of a positive self identity. The mentor enhances the protégé's sense of competence, identity, and effectiveness in their professional and organizational advancement (Kram, 1988). The emotional bond developed in the relationship is the

most crucial component. Psychosocial development includes: role modeling; acceptance and confirmation; counseling; and friendship.

### *Role Modeling*

Role modeling is the most common psychosocial role and involves the mentor setting a desirable example for the protégé (Kram, 1988). The respect and admiration protégés have for their mentor helps the protégés focus on developing knowledge and skills similar to their mentors. Kram found that “to the extent that the junior colleague sees parts of his current and idealized self, the senior colleague serves as an object of admiration, emulation, and respect” (Kram, 1988, p. 33). Not only are the professional styles of handling situations seen and respected by the protégés, but the protégés will also desire to copy or emulate the values, attitudes, and behavior of their mentor. Kram (1988) posits, “The model shares his style, personal values, and professional identity” (p. 33). The protégé may emulate certain aspects of his mentor and may reject others. This in itself is growth as the protégé begins developing a clearer sense of self.

There are many aspects of role modeling seen through the CEOs’ experiences. Wayne observed his mentor run a business and make good decisions. Wayne later used these same techniques when running his business.

He hires better than anyone I have ever seen, and Ted taught me a way to hire and staff your organization. Ted always tried to hire people that were different from him, because if he hired somebody who was better financially, then it supplemented him. Well, what I need to do here to turn this company around is I

need kind of full circle of people, and I need people that are better than I am...And that is how I kind of staffed...and I mainly learned that from Ted.

A unique mentoring relationship occurred between Ben and his mentor, his father. Ben is the CEO of an international company that has been family owned since its founding. Ben discussed how difficult it has been watching a company where his father knew everyone grow into an organization that is too large for him to know everyone. However, there are many lessons that have been passed down from his mentor, much of which was learned from observation.

I do not have a lot of recollection of saying that I had a mentoring relationship with someone, other than specifically with my father. Some of it by watching him, but most of it by the way that he conducted his life and the things that he did...It was not just an example to me, but it was an example to others. I had obviously the benefit, since he was my father and I saw that he practiced what he preached, and that was the distinction, perhaps that I had.

No other CEO that I interviewed had taken over a company from their father, and no other CEO mentioned their father in such an affirmative way. Ben obviously treasures the lessons he learned from his father and the role model his father provided for himself and others.

A more behavioral example of role modeling is seen in the experiences of Randy. Randy recognized that the reason a company has a certain environment or culture is because of the way the top executives lead their employees. Randy learned this from watching his mentor and now tries to create a similar environment for his employees.

“Scott had always ran his company, that his door is open to anybody, and that permeates down through the organization. Organizations tend to take on the characteristics of its leaders. I have tried to do the same thing.”

Something that stands out through all the experiences is the unconscious way in which the mentor role modeled and protégés emulated their mentor. Being a role model does not seem to be intentional on the mentor’s part, instead they behaved and conducted business as usual, and the protégé watched and learned and began handling things in a similar way. On the other hand, the CEOs as mentors often mention the way in which they try to lead by example. Not so much so that others will emulate them, but just because they want to do the right thing for those that are watching. It is my analysis that, as protégés, the CEOs realized that they have emulated their mentors and that others could now be trying to emulate them. Both Tom and Roger mentioned that they learned to mentor others by the way they were mentored.

Tom had seen how mentoring could be negative when the mentors would show favoritism towards their protégés, causing others to treat the protégés unfairly. This influenced how he sees mentoring relationships. There was a certain mentor of his that handled things like Tom thought they should be, and he followed his example.

There’s actually somebody who I considered a mentor...he had a very casual way. He kind of identified people...after a while you realize this very senior person was paying more attention to you and giving you good advice, so you think okay, ‘I’m kind of in.’ He did it fairly softly without creating any waves...I

approach it (mentoring) just like the guy I talked about, kind of casually, informally, just going around and seeing them.

Earlier in the analysis, I described Roger's experience with his mentor, who coached and sponsored him throughout most of his professional development. This had such an impact, that Roger intends to do the same.

The experience I had with this guy, Jimmy is something I'm trying to replicate with other people. It was so helpful for me, and it's hard to do. It's actually easier to tell people, and that's probably the least effective thing you can do. You ask [pause], find [pause], get into their heads, find out about their thought processes, you know, help them with other things.

Roger is comparing this to his experience with his mentor.

Jimmy always treated me, he never directed me to do anything, we had regular meetings, a lot of them by phone and some in person, that's the first time I ever had anybody that would have more of a consultant style with me...He would start with other questions, if he knew I was wrong, he would ask, 'what about this, what do you think about that, how are you going to deal with this,' and he started that process with me, it was really sort of this educational process.

The specific details CEOs could describe about their mentors told me that the CEOs noticed every action and admired what their mentors were capable of accomplishing. "Fundamental respect and admiration for the senior manager make the young manager open to learning through observation" (Kram, 1988, p. 34). Nelson

obviously admired his mentor and watched and learned from even the smallest actions of his mentor.

He was an incredibly smart engineer. He could take a fountain pen, an old knobby type, and with a plain piece of paper he would be sitting there talking about an engineering project, and the first thing you know, he would be drawing it, and it would look like he had drawn it with instruments, and he was very proper, and he would letter it just like an engineer would.

Twenty years later the vivid way in which Nelson can describe his mentor demonstrates the significance of role modeling. Kram (1988) explains that role modeling “...succeeds because of the emotional attachment that is formed” (p. 34). The emotional connection was obvious to me as the CEOs often sat back and looked off trying to take themselves back to the moment they were describing. Some even paused seeming to collect their memories before moving on to the next story. The pride with which the CEOs described their mentors was evident.

Kram (1988) discussed how “the senior colleague serves as an object of admiration, emulation, and respect” (p. 33). However, Kram does not elaborate on the emotions. The CEOs never overtly discussed their emotional relationships with their mentors; however, the stories they shared contained numerous examples of how they felt. Nelson does so when describing one of his mentors:

I learned a lot from Larry. I learned from Larry how to better relate to people. Larry was fairly short and stocky strong kind of guy, and he went off to the Merchant Marines, and he did not even finish high school. He

went off to the Merchant Marines, and he lied about his age and sailed around the country and around the world, and then he came back and got his GED and he went to the University of Alabama and became a mining engineer, and his early business experience was in the mines, unions, rough and tough, and all of that, and he was hired here to run our mines which were going to be brand new sources of fuel for us, but he brought with him very much of an approach to management style that I found attractive. It was clear to me that he always worked harder than everybody else. It was clear to me that he would not ask you to do anything that he would not do himself. He was fair, but he was tough and very demanding. From a criticism standpoint I guess that I would say that he was too inclined to rely on his impulses, but just in terms of how he dealt with wage earning employees, was always with respect. He was not a molly coddler. He was not easy, and he did not patronize anybody, but was very respectable, and that was something that sort of was part of my natural style anyway. There were a lot of things that I value that I learned from him.

Throughout the experiences shared, the CEOs described their mentors with an almost unrealistic perspective. Admiration could be heard in their voice. These protégés seemed to be willing to defend their mentors to the end. It was not that the CEOs did not recognize their mentors' faults, it was more that their mentors' faults could be

overlooked because there were so many good things about the mentor. The mentors' faults made the mentors human.

Admiration, respect, pride, and confidence are all relational elements that describe how the CEOs felt towards their mentors. Kram (1988) identifies that role modeling is successful because of the emotional connectedness protégés has with their mentors. Of all the CEOs experiences, I have identified more relational elements in role modeling than in any other role of mentoring functions.

#### *Acceptance-and-confirmation*

The acceptance-and-confirmation role provides the mentor and the protégé a sense of self. Sense of self stems from the positive regard conveyed by both the mentor and the protégé (Kram, 1988). The mentor provides support and encouragement as the protégé develops competence in his or her work. Through her research, Kram (1988) found that “positive feedback, mutual liking, and mutual respect help both individuals...and allows the protégé to experiment with new behaviors” (p. 35).

Developing this component of mentoring relationships may mean the relationship has deepened, reaching a level of understanding that few relationships can provide. Once the protégé feels acceptance-and-confirmation, the protégé may begin to disagree and start a conflict. The relationship will reach a depth of understanding that allows both the mentor and protégé to tolerate differences found in one another. The tolerance leads to an even deeper understanding of self.

Throughout most of the experiences described, trust and respect was apparent in the relationships between the CEOs and their mentors. Support-and-confirmation as well



as honest feedback (as seen in coaching) is evident in many of the stories told. Barry is the co-founder and CEO of a Fortune 100 company and needed a lot of confirmation along the road to start his own business. He described one person who confirmed that what he was doing was going to succeed. “Lee has been huge, he has really been. His mentorship was reinforcing in our minds that we were doing something that was really pretty good. I mean nobody has been more complimentary and more supportive of us.” Whenever doubt arose, Lee provided a much needed confirmation to Barry’s sense of self and his development.

There were specific examples where the protégés felt empowered to disagree and challenge their mentors. The confirmation-and-acceptance that comes from being able to share your own ideas and know that someone will respect the ideas can really make a big difference. Following George’s military career, he was sought after in the corporate world and was given many good opportunities. During this time, he developed a strong relationship with one of his mentors. There was mutual respect as well as mutual admiration developed between the two. At the same time, opportunities arose for George to develop and strengthen his own self-understanding.

When he would question you, you have to defend your ideas. That is the way he did business, and when he is the boss, that is uncomfortable, and so a lot of people would not stand up and either say ‘that is not right, or this is the way I think it should be done, and you can think that if you want to, but here is why I think it, da da da da....’ I would, and so we got real close.

The depth of such a relationship allows both the mentor and protégé to tolerate differences found in one another. The tolerance can allow the protégé to feel strong enough to become confrontational providing both the mentor and protégé a deeper understanding of self. George continued describing his mentor after having further developed the relationship:

We had a real tough negotiation and we [George and two other co-workers] finally concluded that the only way that we [the organization] could succeed was a certain way. This was the only way to go. This was not the way Nelson had envisioned. As a matter of fact he said, 'It is not going to happen that way. We [the organization] are not going to do that.' ...and we [George and two other co-workers] all finally agreed that this was the only way that it could happen. There was not another way. You cannot satisfy all four parties, us and three others. So, I had gotten pretty close to Nelson, because this was his pet project, and he was responsible for trying to get this done, and he had picked out the three of us to do it. Finally he got up and started to leave, and I said, 'Excuse me. Sit down...You cannot walk out. It is too important. Sit down, and let us finish. Then you can say, 'No,' if you want to, but you are not going anywhere.' And he looked at me and he sat back down. I say, not against Nelson, but to say that there are different ways that you can mentor. You do not have to be top-down. Everybody can teach somebody something. Well, it is just a fact. I mean the other two had not worked with him that

close. Not only are we close in age, but they had not worked that closely. They would have been afraid of how he would react, and I knew what he would do. That it would shock him, and he would sit back down. Yeah, it was the shock factor of...challenging him right to his face and saying, 'Sit down!' They would have had no idea of how he would react, and I knew how he was going to react.

Having someone who allows you to challenge them can be confirming. A mentor who confirms who the protégé is and how the protégé acts can really make a difference in the protégé's personal development. However, having someone accept the ideas they with which they disagree and yet still respect the person is even more significant. Mentors who create an environment where the protégés feel it is acceptable to question who they are, and possibly experiment with different behaviors, increases the level of development and can be self actualizing. Also, the level of learning can increase when mentors create opportunities for the protégés to question and experiment with problem solving. Tom is a CEO who creates this opportunity for learning. He is a quiet, reflective man with a twist of humor thrown in. He is very much an introvert and is guarded to an extent. Once you develop a trustworthy relationship, I believe he would go to any depth to help you. He is very fair and expects a high level of trust in his relationships. He strives to create an environment where understanding self and developing your own identity are acceptable and safe practices. He also creates opportunities for the protégé to discover what is best for themselves.

It is important to have somebody who listens, takes into account others, and actually pushes the decision making down as far as possible. Don't bring things higher in the organization than need be desired. It's easy to develop ownership if the janitor makes a decision, and it bubbles up, than it is if I say do this, then people say 'well I don't think that's the right thing to do,' then don't make it the right thing to do, you want a situation where protégé says 'hey boss, this is a dumb idea,' and if they say that, they gotta say 'here's why you should do that.'

In the end, the self confidence and self understanding acceptance-and-confirmation brings to personal development can be critical to the protégé's self image. Barry confers his respect and appreciation to the mentor who provided him confirmation-and-acceptance when starting his own business, "He has really brought it to a height that I could not have possibly attained on my own." Barry felt secure enough with himself and his business to recognize the part his mentor played in helping him succeed thirty years after his mentor confirmed that he was doing the right thing.

There is a high level of mutual trust and respect throughout confirmation and acceptance. While the mentor is supporting and accepting the protégé, the protégés are showing appreciation and support for their mentors. Henry provided an example,

I think that Bill [mentor] was key, he was willing to say, 'Hey, you run the organization.' This professional relationship was completely one of trust. We would meet weekly and talk about what was happening in the organization, but it was completely in the context of 'Tell me what you are doing. Let's talk about it.' I really appreciated that.

The support demonstrated by the mentors, as well as the trust and respect are the relational elements demonstrated throughout acceptance-and-confirmation.

### *Counseling*

The counseling role enables the individual to explore personal concerns that may interfere with a positive sense of self. Both the content and the process of interaction are important to examine in order to understand the nature of the counseling role (Kram, 1983). Being able to obtain advice, perhaps from someone who has similar experiences, can help the protégé to overcome any internal conflicts. Throughout the different stages of development, there are a variety of unknowns with which young professionals struggle. Worries regarding competence and decisions related to work and life balance can be hard to handle. The mentor can act as a sounding board for self-exploration and provide personal experience as an alternative perspective (Kram, 1988). In providing counseling, Kram (1988) found that “the senior manager becomes a confidante for the young manager. What is shared in the relationship goes beyond the boundaries of most hierarchical relationships” (p. 37).

Counseling was reported in several different areas of the CEOs’ experiences as protégés, but primarily when the CEOs sought advice when making a decision or taking a risk. The CEO would look to his mentor for guidance and advice. Tom described a relationship he has with one of his mentors, not someone real high up in the organization, but someone who had been around and had a lot of experience in the organization on which to base advice.

I associated with him for a much longer period of time, he was somebody that whenever you felt like you needed to talk to somebody you could go to this guy, whether you worked for him or not, and he would make time. He was just a superb individual, no real agenda, really bright guy, didn't really play the politics. He was somebody who made the whole organization better. I can still call him up and say 'I have this situation....'

When Barry was trying to sort through starting his own business, he looked to his mentor, now partner, for counsel. He needed encouragement and, more importantly, a sounding board to make sure he was doing the right thing.

Kim was in school, and he would come back periodically, and we had gotten to know each other through work, and we would talk and sometimes look at locations, even though we did not know what the store was going to be, and we kind of went from one thing to another. I kind of wanted to throw my ideas around, and he would listen and give me more ideas. He helped me to think about what I really wanted.

Being able to listen, provide feedback, and given attention are relational elements in several of the roles a mentor can play, including counseling. Regarding the counseling role, CEOs often described how their mentors listened to them and showed interest in what they were saying. I concluded that a high level of comfort is needed for counseling to be effective. Kram (1988) stated, "The alliance formed through the counseling function counteracts the organizational force that can contribute to alienation and a decline in self worth" (p. 38). This alliance creates a bond between the mentor and

protégé as described by Randy, “we just clicked.” An indescribable understanding that occurs in the mentoring relationship which leads to growth and development for both the mentor and the protégé.

### *Friendship*

This indescribable understanding can also be thought of as friendship. Once a mentoring relationship has developed into a friendship, the mentor and protégé have a “...mutual sense of liking and understanding and enjoy informal exchanges about work and outside work experiences” (Kram, 1988, p. 38). The mentor and protégé may have informal interaction resulting in casual conversation, which may lead to the protégé feeling more like a peer to their mentor. As friendship emerges, the protégé will feel a sense of collegiality and an ability to relate on a different level than before the friendship existed.

I had the opportunity to interview two CEOs who had worked with one another (one as the CEO of a holding company and one was the CEO of a subsidiary). Each claimed the other as a mentor and a friend. Their experiences encapsulated the perfect example of a friendship emerging from a mentoring relationship. George, as he worked for Nelson, realized he would never replace him because they were too close in age. However, the amount of respect and admiration he shared with and for Nelson is truly unique.

Nelson was one (mentor), obviously, because Nelson and I grew pretty close, pretty quick. We are about the same age. I could tell Nelson some things that you would not tell anyone, not that you could, that you would, that is the key. I am

not sure at what point we became friends. We are really great friends, and friends can tell each other how it is, where business associates may not be able to. I mean he is my biggest fan and biggest critic. And I am his biggest fan and biggest critic, too.

On the other side is Nelson, “There are many people with whom I have great relationships. George was a mentor of mine and a dear friend. I think that he was first a dear friend and then a mentor, and maybe it is a reciprocal arrangement.”

The obvious loyalty and love these two gentlemen share is seen today in their interactions. There is a level of comfort between them that is not often found. The number of times that both Nelson and George mentioned mutual admiration, mutual respect, mutual learning, and mutual understanding demonstrates how their relationship is about one another.

On the other hand, “some individuals choose to contain informal social interactions to the work context in order to minimize the conflicts created in being both boss and friend” (Kram, 1988, p. 39). Henry described his mentoring style as having boundaries.

Something I have not intended to do on either side of the relationship (as mentor or as protégé) is really enhance the personal relationships, whether a mentor or a mentee...even the stronger relationships that did occur are fairly confined with boundaries and more self-imposed than not. I see other people, in both directions (as mentor or as protégé), are much more inclined to take it more in a personal direction. It is probably a good



thing, but it has just never been in my inclination to do that. I probably have always been more conscious of hierarchy. I do think that there is a scale of mentoring relationships that I probably never had, and I have kept that distance in these relationships. I will get close to you to a point, but there is that role.

Friendship can provide a special opportunity; however, there is risk involved especially if the protégé and mentor are still connected in a professional environment. The CEOs that described their mentors as friends had long since moved on to other opportunities, and the tension caused by the work environment was not there. Being able to show affection and friendship is much easier when the mentor and protégé are no longer working together.

The mentoring relationship can be a path that leads to the development of mutual respect and sometimes a caring strongly rooted in friendship (Shea, 1994). Henry provided a good example of the path to friendship.

People that are successful at my age are still being mentored by someone...it could be a friend, it could be a board member. I get mentoring from some of my friends at the previous company. They wear both hats, counseling and friend, and they still give advice. Alan, [mentor] who is now really a peer and a good friend is prepared to provide counseling. He is one of two mentors I have gotten close to over the years.

Earlier in our conversation, Henry described his mentor, Alan. The friendship begins to immerge through the experience Henry shared:

Alan, the office manager there, for most of those seventeen years was kind of my chief mentor throughout that period. In the role of mentoring there, somebody had to be watching out for me in terms of assignments. Two of us showed up on the same day, and I got one assignment and he got the other. Well here at the end of the day I am working for my successor company, and this other fellow left two or three years later. So, you know some of that is having someone watch out for you. The other joke between us is that I have tried to quit at least five times. I mean, to the point that I was on Alan's schedule and when I would get on his schedule, he would take a sick day and just not let me get to him. So, he avoided me, and by the next day I had changed my mind.... Yeah, after fifteen years together, Alan knew that about me. He mentored me numerous ways...he is a good friend.

Once a mentoring relationship has developed into a friendship, the mentor and protégé have a mutual sense of liking. The respect and care demonstrated in friendship are the relational elements of a long-term mentoring relationships. Many of the mentors, now friends, still provide advice for the CEOs today.

### *Summary of Mentoring Functions*

The career development and psychosocial functions are two of the essential elements that emerged from the data shared by the CEOs. The functions are developed by the needs of the protégé and by the strengths of the mentor. The needs of the protégé considered most important by the mentor will affect the functions in a relationship. The

purpose of the relationship changes as individual needs change. The developmental tasks influence the identified needs brought to the relationship (Kram, 1983). In addition, Kram identified that the organizational context shapes the opportunity to develop certain components of both the career development and psychosocial functions. Finally, the relational elements of the individuals involved influence the functions provided. The relational elements determine how the relationship starts, how it will continue, and the range of functions present in the relationship. I will now discuss the third theme, relational elements and the influence relational elements have on mentoring relationships.

### *Relational Elements*

The third theme that emerged relates to the relational elements of the mentor-protégé dynamic. Relational elements are described throughout the stories shared by the CEOs. This is where the essence of the experience lies. The core of what makes the mentoring relationship so significant is the relational elements that surround every function and every interaction between the CEOs and their mentors. There were three essential elements identified that comprise the relational elements theme: values, attributes, and actions (see Table 6).

Throughout the interviews, the CEOs were more than willing to share stories about the mentors who influenced them. For some, the list was long, and for others it consisted of two or three key people. For each one, the thoughts they shared came easily and flowed without hesitation. Each experience came with a set of elements that described the mentoring functions that occurred between the mentor and the protégé.

The roles within the two functions were associated with certain values, attributes, and actions, which have been grouped together to describe the relational elements (Table on page 138). This part was the most exciting for me because throughout my research I have asked the question, “Why do mentoring relationships work?” I find the relational elements that emerged from the mentoring experiences to capture the heart of the relationship and go beyond existing frameworks or themes found in the mentoring literature.

Table 6

Relational Elements of the Mentoring Relationship

| <b>Attributes</b>                     | <b>Values</b>      | <b>Actions</b>                  |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------|---------------------------------|
| Admiration                            | Trust              | Support and Encouragement       |
| Pride                                 | Honesty            | Appreciation                    |
| Confidence<br>(Believed in me)        | Respect            | Personal interest or connection |
| Not letting them down<br>(Obligation) | Caring             | Attention (Time)                |
| Inspiration and Aspiration            | Open Communication | Listening (Communicated)        |

### *Attributes*

An attribute is defined as “a quality ascribed to a person or thing; a characteristic quality” (Allen, 1990). Each relationship had a special quality that was unique. For example, each relationship had some kind of personal connection. As Wayne described, “I really clicked with Peter.” This connection was the beginning of a long-term

mentoring relationship that continues today. Nelson described this as "...we hit it off." The connection is an indescribable means of relating with each other; a natural occurrence that makes the mentoring relationship work. The personal interest that was shown by the mentors helped define the relationship as mentoring. George said, "He (the mentor) took a real interest in me and my career. He was a good mentor." There was something about these relationships that ignited the mentoring aspect and helped the relationship develop.

The admiration shown for the mentors described by the CEOs throughout their experiences was evident. George said, "I could tell my mentor some things that you would not tell anyone, not that you could, that you would, that is the key. He is one of the more intelligent people I have ever met." Barry says of his business partner and mentor, "He has really brought the business to a height that I could not have possibly attained on my own." Wayne tells about hiring his mentor, "I needed somebody that I could just unequivocally trust and knew could do the job."

With this admiration came confidence, obligation and inspiration. The CEOs did not want to let their mentors down, as they had a sense of obligation and wanted to make their mentors proud. "Terry believed in me, and I was glad that he was happy with my decision," stated Roger. Karl said, "My mentor did not have any children, so he kind of took me under his wing...I think that he saw things in me that I did not know I had." Nelson mentioned, "I wanted his (approval), and I wanted to learn from him."

The mentors' ability to inspire and invoke confidence in their protégés combined with the mentors' strong personal characteristics created attributes for the protégés to

follow and emulate. The mentors described by CEOs are more like heroes than real men in the eyes of the CEOs.

### *Values*

Values are beliefs or attitudes about what is good, right, desirable, worthwhile (Allen, 1990). Trust, honesty, open communication, respect, and caring were all values described by the CEOs. These mentoring relationships impacted the CEOs because of certain values that were present in the relationships. “Yeah, trust is one of the things that you look for in business, in people, and keeping a relationship. You want to find people that are confident enough in their own abilities that they are not threatened by anyone else,” said Wayne. Roger described his interaction, “We had regular meetings, a lot of them by phone, some in person. That’s the first time I ever had anybody that would have more of a consultant style with me. ...he would tell me what’s good about things and what’s bad about them.” Barry described one of his mentors as “...one of the most beloved men I have ever met in my life. If he had told me to walk off a cliff, I would have said, ‘OK!’ ” “I got a lot of direction and a lot of confidence to go maybe do things that you wouldn’t have thought of doing. I didn’t abuse his trust, and we had a two-way relationship,” Tom said. Tom also used the word respect when describing his mentor, “I still have a great deal of respect for him, he certainly had goals for me and the organization.”

The values of the mentor and protégé took the mentoring relationship to a deeper level than most developmental relationships. The relationships were strengthened by values and provided a mutual understanding that allowed the mentor and protégé to

connect and be completely open with one another. In many relationships, one party may feel the need to be guarded. I conclude that in a true mentoring relationship there is no guardedness. The values held by the relationship allow for more openness and understanding.

### *Actions*

The final significant element that emerged from the CEOs' experiences as protégés included specific actions that were provided by the mentors. These elements are not necessarily tangible, but they are actions that were perceived important to the CEO. The actions described include: support and encouragement, appreciation, personal attention, personal connection, communication, and listening. Barry described the actions when he said, "His (the mentor) early support and encouragement was critical, and I do not think that it would have happened without that." George discussed another couple of elements when he said, "He took an interest in my career, and spent time with me. We worked well together." Tom simply stated, "It boils down to a positive influence."

The actions are not significant by themselves, but when put together with the values and attributes of the relationship create a special connection and opportunity for development. Listening is effective, but when listening occurs in an open, trusting relationship there is stronger communication. Open communication and trusting relationships are demonstrated by the CEOs with their mentors. Encouragement and support are important in helping someone, but when the encouragement and support comes with inspiration, confidence, and caring, it has a greater impact. The values and

attributes result in the actions described and together create the relational elements. The relational elements make the outcomes of mentoring relationships possible.

### *Summary of Relational Elements*

The final theme relates to the relational components of the experience that reveals the emotional connectedness of the CEO to his mentor. Five of the twelve CEOs described an experience with one of their mentors that was both extremely special and unique. Individuals' stories can share different aspects of what the individual is feeling or who they see a certain situation. Five of the CEOs shared their stories in such a way that I perceived them to tell a truth that was more evident than the others, these five CEOs became key informants to the study. The five experiences shared contained all the relational elements. The five relationships were long term, lasting for most of the CEOs careers. For each of the five CEOs, virtually all of their protégé experiences were related to their one, long term mentor. All the mentoring relationships resulted in positive outcomes for the mentor and the CEO. Only these five relationships, however, provided a deeper level of development for both the protégé and mentor. All of the relationships were also informal. Kram (1988) described informal mentoring relationships as usually being very close and intimate, resulting in mutual admiration, mutual learning, mutual trust, and mutual respect. This is the key to a deeper relationship. Because of the informal nature of the five enhanced relationships discussed above, the mentors identified the protégés and chose to develop a closer relationship with the protégés. In the end, the five relationships resulted in friendships with enhanced outcomes, mutual learning, and development.



Friendship has been identified by Kram (1988) as the final phase of mentoring relationships. The relational elements are evident in the friendships described by George and Nelson within which they refer to one another. About George, Nelson said, “George was a mentor of mine and a dear friend. I think that he was first a dear friend and then a mentor, and maybe it was a reciprocal arrangement.” George refers to Nelson when saying, “Oh, yeah, Nelson is a really great friend, and friends can tell each other how it is, where business associates may not be able to. I mean he is my biggest fan and biggest critic, and I am his biggest fan and biggest critic, too.” The five mentoring relationships illustrate the final stage of the mentoring framework in which enhanced outcomes occur, resulting in mutual learning and development.

#### Framework of CEOs as Protégés

The mentoring framework was developed as a result of the analysis of the experiences of CEOs as protégés. The twelve CEOs, including the five key informants, all describe mentoring as a key aspect of their development and easily identified those individuals who influenced their success. The experiences support the current literature and social networks theory. Higgins and Kram (2001) identified one aspect of the social networks theory as the developmental network perspective. The definition of an individuals’ developmental network is “the set of people a protégé names as taking an active interest in an action to advance the protégés’ career by providing developmental assistance” (p. 268). This is illustrated by the mentoring framework. To the five CEOs and their mentors, however, a new level of development is introduced. These five relationships are based on trust which instills loyalty and commitment to one another.

The enhanced level of mutual development and learning is a result of the relational elements present in the five mentoring relationships. Kalbfleisch (2002) found that “it is possible that the protégé can eventually help the mentor, and the relationship ultimately may come full circle as the partners in the relationship evolve” (p. 67).

### *Mentoring Framework*

From the analysis presented in this chapter, a framework emerges from three primary themes. The framework is used to understand the essential elements of the CEO’s experience as a protégé (Figure on page 137). Each component of the framework has been discussed in the previous sections and will now be illustrated. Human interactions are complex and difficult to explain. Many of these interactions take place over a long time frame, they consist of multiple interactions, and occur in a variety of context. Therefore, I will present the framework using a simple and fictitious example.

#### *Level One*

- Bob (mentor) and Joe (protégé) meet.
- Bob recognizes potential in Joe. Joe sees something in Bob that he admires.
- Bob and Joe begin to interact, and Bob realizes Joe’s need for development. Joe begins to develop respect for Bob.
- Over a course of time Bob provides mentoring functions (see Table 2) for Joe and Joe is receptive [As the mentor and protégé interact, a combination of roles are present, fulfilling one or both of the mentoring functions, psychosocial (first theme) and career development (second theme)].

- For each role provided in the functions certain relational elements (see Table 7) are observed. (The third theme describes the relational elements of the mentoring relationships.)
- The mentoring relationships results in outcomes for the protégé, mentor, and organization. (see Tables 3, 4, & 5).

According to this study, a majority of the relationships never pass this point.

However, a positive developmental experience can still result. A small portion of the mentoring relationships move beyond level one (see Figure 1). Based on observation of many potential protégés, mentors chose only a few to further develop. Moving beyond level one is not common, only five of the twelve CEOs in this study described a level two experience.

- Bob and Joe really “clicked,” there is something special in their relationships that has created a deeper emotional bond. (A clue that this special relationship existed is heard in the language of the CEOs as they described interactions with their mentors; “we just clicked,” “we hit it off,” and “we really connected.”)
- From the outcomes and performance in level one, Bob and Joe are bonded through the relational elements.

#### *Level Two*

- Bob recognizes he wants to invest in Joe. (“Selection” for level two is based on the mentors’ perception of the protégés’ work performance and other personal characteristics. The experiences that come through the enhanced relationships are intentional.)

- Delving deeper into the relationship is risky and requires good communication.
- Joe and Bob's values, actions, and attributes (relational elements) are mutual.
- The longer and deeper the relationship the more significant the interaction. More relational elements are present.

Once selected mentors and protégés enter into an even more intense and unique developmental relationship based on values, actions, and attributes (see Table 7). The relational elements are woven throughout the experiences. According to Kram (1983), the most effective mentoring relationships are enabled by the emergence and strengthening of interpersonal connections between the mentor and protégé that foster mutual trust and increase intimacy (see Figure 1).

- Bob continues mentoring Joe with more care and purpose. Because of the depth of the relationship, Joe also provides development for Bob, creating a more mutual relationship where both Joe and Bob are developed (Only five of the CEO relationships discussed a special connection resulting in enhanced outcomes, many of which were mutual).

Figure 1. Framework for the Development of Mentoring Relationships

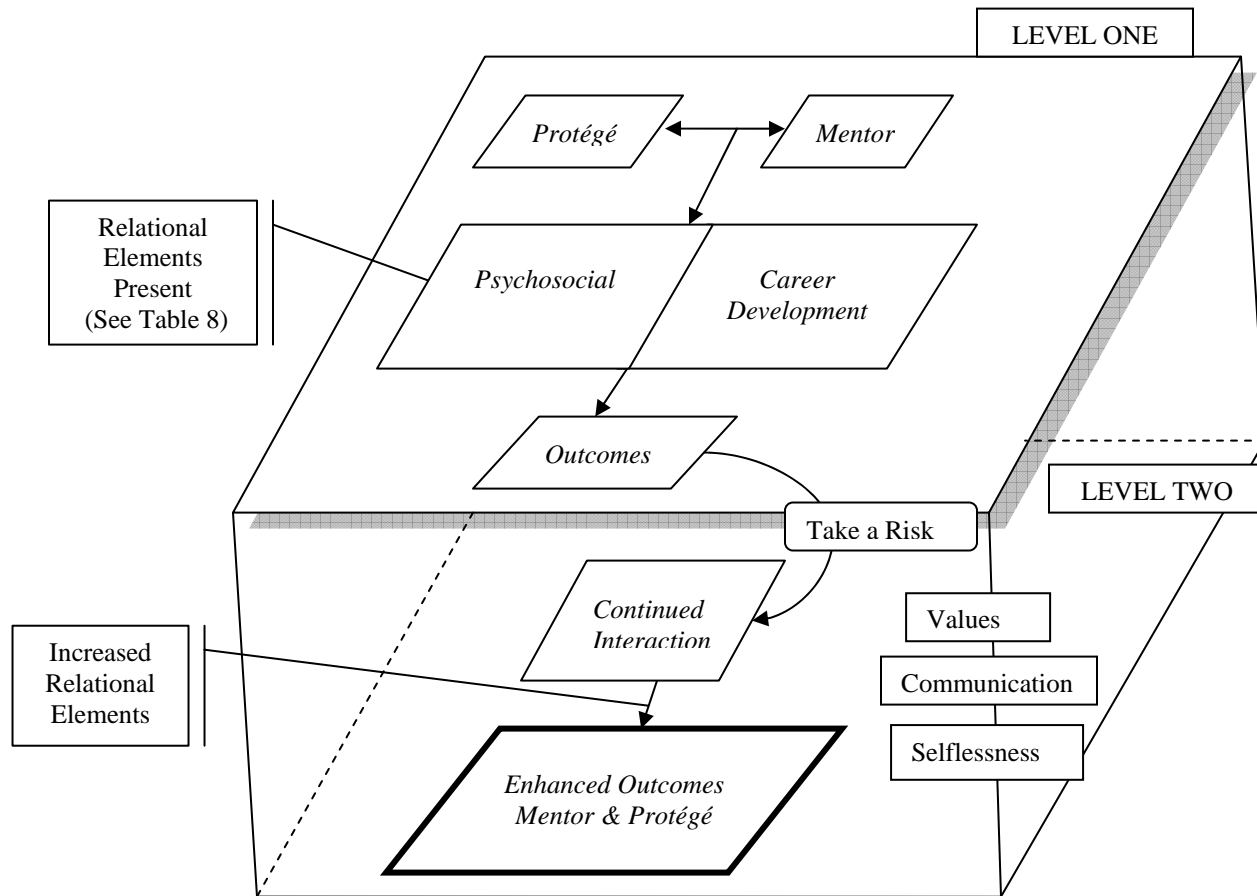


Table 7. Relational Elements Found in Mentoring Functions

|                              | Sponsorship | Exposure<br>Visibility | Coaching | Protection | Challenging<br>Assignments | Role<br>Modeling | Acceptance<br>Confirmation | Counseling | Friendship |
|------------------------------|-------------|------------------------|----------|------------|----------------------------|------------------|----------------------------|------------|------------|
| Trust                        |             |                        |          |            |                            |                  | ✓                          |            |            |
| Honesty                      |             |                        | ✓        |            |                            |                  |                            | ✓          |            |
| Respect                      |             |                        |          |            |                            | ✓                | ✓                          |            | ✓          |
| Caring                       |             |                        |          |            |                            |                  |                            |            | ✓          |
| Open<br>Communication        |             |                        | ✓        |            |                            |                  |                            | ✓          |            |
| Admiration                   |             |                        |          |            |                            | ✓                |                            |            |            |
| Pride                        |             | ✓                      |          |            |                            | ✓                |                            |            |            |
| Confidence                   |             | ✓                      |          |            |                            | ✓                |                            |            |            |
| Obligation                   | ✓           |                        |          | ✓          |                            |                  |                            |            |            |
| Inspiration<br>Aspiration    |             |                        |          |            | ✓                          |                  |                            |            |            |
| Support and<br>Encouragement |             |                        |          | ✓          |                            |                  | ✓                          |            | ✓          |
| Appreciation                 | ✓           |                        |          |            |                            |                  |                            |            |            |
| Personal<br>Interest         |             |                        | ✓        |            |                            |                  |                            | ✓          |            |
| Attention                    |             |                        | ✓        |            |                            |                  |                            |            |            |
| Listening                    |             |                        | ✓        |            |                            |                  |                            | ✓          |            |

### *Context for Mentoring Framework*

Each mentoring relationship described by the CEOs began informally. The CEOs, as young professionals, were not necessarily seeking mentors. Instead, after some brief interactions with more advanced professionals, something “clicked” and the opportunity for development occurred. Both parties (the CEOs as protégés and the mentors) unconsciously created a mentoring relationship. Throughout all the CEOs’ experiences a variety of roles were filled by the mentors, providing both career development and psychosocial functions. Each role provided a combination of relational elements creating a bond between the mentor and the protégé. Each relationship lead to positive outcomes for the CEOs as protégés.

Most relationships took the typical path following Kram’s (1983) four phases of mentoring relationships, and in time were redefined to mutual friendships. Less than half of the experiences described were strengthened beyond the usual relationship. For those relationships that did go beyond the usual point, the mentor and protégé continued interacting and more of the relational elements were shared in the relationship. Through the continued interaction, the outcomes were enhanced and the learning became mutual. The mentor learned from the protégé as the protégé continued to learn from the mentor. The level of self-disclosure was higher and the connectedness between the mentor and protégé was strengthened creating a special long-term bond between the two.

During the follow up interviews, I asked three of the five key informants who had developed an enhanced mentoring relationship with their mentors, what made the relationship so special. Having common values, strong communication, trust, and

selflessness were the primary components of the “special” relationships. Nelson provided insight when describing his mentor.

We helped each other. It wasn't about him or about me, we were in this for the company and to help each other. I saw him work harder than anyone and he cared a lot about people and so do I, he had a heart of gold...We didn't always agree, but I always knew he would listen and we could talk things through.

Nelson described the selfless nature of both the protégé and mentor, the focus was the company and doing what was best for the other person. The values of working hard and caring about people struck a chord with Nelson that he could relate to and emulate.

Roger's mentor was across the country working at a different location and yet, a strong relationship was developed that helped Roger become who he is today.

Our personalities worked well together, he knew what I needed and wasn't strong headed about it. He and I communicated well, although it was only once or twice a week. We made the conversations count. He never passed judgment on me and was always willing to listen.

The mentor's willingness to listen and consider the protégés' ideas and thoughts was greatly valued by the protégé. Listening is a large part of good communication and by fully listening much can be heard that might not actually be spoken. I think this is the case with Roger's mentor.

George provided some more insight into the components of the enhanced mentoring relationship. He also brought the idea of risk, which is a perspective I have



failed to see and believe is crucial in understanding how these mentoring relationships work.

There is mutual respect and trust and you know you have a lot in common like beliefs, morals, and values. I observed these things in him (mentor) over time. You just sort of relate at a certain level that you might not with someone else (not your mentor). There is a blending after a while and you begin to support and help one another. But, I think it is sort of like a marriage or a friendship and certain risks are involved. Being able to give candid feedback, being closer to someone, I guess, you have to risk more to get more, but you never really know what is going to happen.

The initial ideas shared by George are consistent with the previously mentioned CEOs, but risk is a component I had not considered. Taking that step closer to someone leads into the unknown. Kalbfleisch (2002) considered personal risk to be a potential undercurrent in the communication of a mentoring relationship. Not only does the risk of destroying a relationship effect what the person thinks, but the communication could be effected between the mentor and protégé, particularly as they take the first step in enhancing their mentoring relationship. As the mentor provides stronger feedback and the protégé begins sharing personal ideas, the unknown of the reactions creates a risk that many might not take, but in the end would enhance the relationship.

Bennetts (1994) agreed with many of the core elements of the enhanced relationship and was also unable to describe the interaction. Bennetts' observation lead him to believe it was magical and mystical.

The mentor alliance consists of a trusting, benevolent alliance, which is sustained by core conditions for learning (empathy, genuineness, unconditional positive regard) and the ability to communicate these conditions. However, there was also a deeply intimate element to the relationship, which appeared to border on the metaphysical or spiritual...there, has to be a willingness to become more intimate for the relationship to work well (Bennetts, 1994, p. 156).

Bennetts supports what the three CEOs reported about their enhanced mentoring relationships; the closeness, the importance of communication, the ability to relate, and the risk to get intimate with another, are just a few of the areas that help to create the unique and special bond of the enhanced mentoring relationship.

#### CEOs as Mentors

The second and final research question was about the CEOs' experiences as a mentor. At the beginning of the study, I expected to get equally rich description of the experiences of the CEOs as protégés and the CEOs as mentors. However, as I shifted our conversations from being a protégé to how the CEOs see their role in developing others, a new dynamic was brought into our interactions. I am disappointed in the lack of information I received on the experiences of the CEOs as mentors. Although the CEOs could describe the characteristics of what they looked for in protégés, the CEOs could not describe the interactions they had with their protégés. There were a few examples of Kram's mentoring functions described in the interactions as a mentor and I have included those in the previous sections where appropriate.

I attribute the lack of information to two things. One, these CEOs are humble and found it difficult to discuss how big a difference they had made or what things were accomplished. Each CEO initially denied that they had been a mentor at all. Instead, the CEOs talked about what they hoped to have accomplished and what they should have done.

This whole thing of developing, mentoring people, is one of the most important factors. It has been hard and maybe it's one of my own biggest failings over the years is not developing enough people – someone else will have to judge that one day. If I write my own report card I'd say that was, I'd say I'd give myself the lowest grade on the card would be development and succession [of] people.

Although he could not describe himself as a mentor, I have interpreted that others believe Randy is. Based on the stories Randy shared, if I were to talk to those involved some would likely call Randy a mentor.

Second, I began each interview by asking the CEOs to describe their mentors. The conversation was so rich, and the CEOs were passionate about telling me of the experiences with their mentors, it was difficult to transition. However, I was able to transition and will discuss those characteristics of the developmental relationships described by the CEOs and connect the characteristics with mentoring. Although these men dare not say they have been mentors, their words and actions have a very different meaning. Tom shared, "You always want to feel like you are developing other people,

and I think you could do that if you give yourself credit having some reason to be in the job you're in, you have got something to offer people."

### *Characteristics of the Protégé*

Each CEO began their answer to the question regarding how they developed others with a description of the characteristics they looked for in others. The CEOs provided characteristics that motivated them to want to invest in a younger, less experienced person who could some day be successful. "I look for people who have high moral values and who are dedicated and who may not necessarily see where to go on their own...and I look for those who are very, very capable, who have really good personal characteristics, but were not open and advertent enough to do it," George described. Many of the characteristics mirrored the CEO's own values. George continued, "I often take a particular interest in those who are considered outsiders, there were a lot of people who considered me an outsider at one point." The CEOs want to help those that need help and, from the perspective of the CEO, have the potential to succeed.

Tom looks at "their thought process and how they communicate, someone might pop out to me if I hear or see they have some insight to something. Somebody with good judgment and who tries to do the right thing." Tom knows what he is looking for and understands when he sees it. When that someone "pops out" to him this can be compared to the "click" or connectedness described by the CEOs when relating to their mentors. A certain something catches the CEO and creates a bond to the protégé.

The CEOs have described what they look for in people they want to develop. It is easy to consider that young professionals would look for in people to connect with and learn from; however, this research has provided evidence that mentors look for people they want to work with and develop. Wayne described, “He has a lot of potential and is very, very talented, easily one of the most talented people that I have ever seen and I want him to work with me on a few things. I think that is a good sign for people that they are willing to put the work in that it takes.” The mentor has been the driving force behind the relationships described by the CEOs in their experiences as a protégé, and it is confirmed that, as a mentor, they were the ones reaching out to connect with others.

For the CEOs I interviewed, the level of the person in the organization really does not influence who the CEOs chose to mentor. Often, the CEOs saw someone several layers down the organizational hierarchy and tried to reach out and develop them. Wayne described his thoughts on the level of the person, “I think pulling somebody, assigning somebody a couple of levels down a project and saying, ‘this is your opportunity and let’s interact directly without the normal chain of command,’ That is a good way to challenge them and see them grow.” Wayne’s intentions are to “...pick people out in a very non-hierarchical way.” George mentioned, “There are different ways you can mentor, it does not have to be top-down.”

### *Characteristics of the Relationship*

Each CEO described characteristics of the relationship they looked for in rising young professionals. I propose that the characteristics demonstrated by the CEOs as mentors are similar to that of the protégé experience the CEOs encountered throughout

their development, much of which they learned from their mentor. To counter this, CEOs also learned what not to do from their mentors and how they would rather develop others through different experiences. For example, Howard tells how the person he looked to as a mentor really hurt him.

He screwed me over. I thought he could help me and really he could have, but instead he lied. I trusted him and instead there is no trust to be had. I do not even believe that this man is capable of trusting. He is mean and ruthless and this has greatly impacted me. I know what I don't want to be as a mentor and I learned that from him.

Although this experience was negative, Howard learned a valuable lesson that makes him a more effective mentor today. Contrary to Ragins, Cotton, and Miller's (2000) finding that indicated it is better to not have a mentor than be involved in a negative mentoring relationship, Howard felt better prepared to be a mentor because of the negative experience with his mentor.

### *Relational Elements*

Trust, caring, honesty, and fairness were all words used to describe how the CEOs felt towards their protégés or those they hoped to develop.

Basically, if you really believe in great people and show them how you treat other people and share what is best for them, good things happen. We respect each other, and because I have the title of CEO does not mean I deserve more respect than the person unloading the trucks in the morning. ...I care about what that person is doing in this company.

Open communication and honest feedback were obviously something that the CEOs appreciated in their mentors and was a common theme associated with how the CEOs developed others. “You want a situation where people say ‘hey boss, this is a dumb idea’ and if they say that, they gotta say here’s why you should do it another way,” said Tom. Roger said he hopes that,

...if they have a problem they look you square in the eye and tell you they have a problem or if they don’t know something they say they don’t know it, but they tell you when they’re gonna fix it, and they come back when they said they were gonna come back, or earlier and say here’s what I’ve done whether it’s they still have problems or they solved it. I like those kind of guys.

Another important attribute of these mentoring relationships is the feeling the CEOs have as mentors when they help develop others with no expectations of getting anything in return. “One of the finest compliments I have ever had, when a guy mentioned me in an acceptance speech. He said that I was one of two people that helped him start his career. It gave me a lot of satisfaction and I was very proud of him, but I never expected anything,” George said. Howard describes mentoring as “giving, giving of yourself. There is no expectation of return. It is all about the heart. It is very emotional, and you have to want to give.”

The specific actions the CEOs demonstrated in their relationships with others are what ensure development is occurring. The specific actions include: time, support, effort, challenges, and primarily setting a good example as role models. George said, “They

became, in many cases, pretty close, because I spent a lot of time with them.” Another example is described by Roger during his early interaction with potential protégés, “We do a lot of stuff. We had lunch today and I asked lots of questions. I get to know them [protégés] and then I use that as an opportunity to talk about strategy and stuff.” Wayne said, “I try to give people, to challenge them, and set a good example for them.” Even the small things can make a difference. “My focus is really on recognition and setting a high standard for them to reach for. I also try to lead by example,” said Barry. The actions of CEOs are noticed by everyone in their company and unintentional actions and decisions make a huge impact on many who work in their companies.

### *Outcomes*

Although the CEOs did not always admit the influence they have on others. The CEOs do understand that mentoring others has positive and negative outcomes. Sharing information, encouraging others to succeed, and “breaking down barriers” were all specifics mentioned by the CEOs. George described a positive outcome for mentoring others,

The positive is that you get to meet bright people, and they get a real taste of how executives operate, and you get to know someone. So, you know they are human, because when you get up, when you get to be an officer, somehow people think that you just were always an officer. You just grew there, you know, you had never been somewhere else. And when you get to be senior officer in corporate management, they think you were born almost at that level. I mean, they do not think you are human. The same



thing with general officers in the army. He does not understand or she does not understand...because we all started somewhere. So, they get to see that corporate officers are human, and there is a human aspect, and they get to see the interface of how it works. It is not just somebody sitting on high saying they have got people they consult with and people they talk to and people they hear, and that is good education, and the personal relationships, and so that is the positive.

In terms of a formal program, George continued,

So, it broadened their perspectives...and it let them see a manager, because he was with them or she was with them all of the time. So they got a taste of this human element of somebody that was two or three levels higher than they were, and were in a non-threatening environment. When you touch base, you get to know, at least to some more intimate degree, some of the leadership of the corporation.

Several CEOs observed negative outcomes in mentoring relationships, and this has influenced how they mentor others. George described negative outcomes of a formal mentoring program,

The negative is I think it builds, even though you say it and you say it and you say it, 'This is not the guarantee to your next promotion.' It does build...it can build unrealistic expectations. So, it can cause some frustration. You know 'I have learned all this, but I am still down here,

and they are up there, and now I know all of this knowledge, and now I still have to get there.’ You have to make sure they understand.

Tom refers to informal relationships,

It can also be negative, where somebody might feel that mentoring somebody [is good] but winds up being like an acolyte, and so people can get thought of badly by the rest of the organization. Mentors have to be careful and not destroy someone’s credibility. I try to be more casual and fair so not to create any waves. George also recognized that “...the positives outweigh the negatives, so I am in favor of mentoring.

Randy recognized “...this whole thing of developing, mentoring people, is one of the most important factors.”

#### *Summary of CEOs as Mentors*

In summary, the CEOs recognize the value of mentoring young professionals. Although, the CEOs were reluctant to identify themselves as mentors, they could easily identify characteristics of potential protégés. I liken the CEOs experience as mentors to a tree. The roots are the foundational experiences provided by their mentors, the trunk is the CEOs career experiences, and the branches are the many areas in which they have influence. The leaves are the potential protégés to whom the tree provides nourishment and share with the protégés the experiences and foundation of the mentor. The acorns are the fruit of the relationships and ensure the future of the organization, creating a forest of future mentors.

### Summary of the Findings

The CEOs I interviewed do have mentors that have been influential in their development. Mentoring relationships were developed in a variety of contexts and were informal in nature. The CEOs found it relatively easy to identify their mentors and to describe the influence the mentors had on the CEOs' development. The emotional connectedness between the mentor and the protégé was the most difficult to understand and explain. The relational elements that were developed through the interactions between the mentor and protégé are what allows for a certain level of development to occur.

Through this study, a strong support of Kram's research on the functions of mentoring relationships emerged. Although it was not the purpose of the study, Kram's mentoring roles were apparent throughout the experience the CEOs had with their mentors. As the CEOs described how their mentors had contributed to their development, the presence of both the career development and psychosocial functions became obvious. Not one mentor provided every role to the CEO, however, each mentor provided the role that was necessary at the time for the CEO to develop. Each role within the two functions was described in one experience or another, fully supporting Kram and her past research.

Another key finding was that, occasionally, a mentoring relationship can evolve into a more meaningful developmental relationship where mutual learning takes place. A framework was presented to describe what occurs when the enhanced development is

present. Relational elements, communication, and taking a risk is what allows for the strengthening and deepening of the relationship.

When investigating the experience of the CEOs as mentors, I found that CEOs do not like talking about themselves in a positive light. The CEOs demonstrated their human nature through their reluctance to admit their influence over others. The CEOs were able to describe the characteristics of mentoring relationships they had with younger professionals and could even describe what they look for when seeking others to develop. A comprehensive understanding of the experience of CEOs as mentors, however, was not as clearly evident.

The CEOs understood how important it was to have certain people help them in getting where they are today. Not only have the mentors helped in developing the CEOs professionally, but also mentors influence the way the CEOs mentor others. Often the CEOs discussed how they learned something from their mentors or how the mentors had, through their actions, demonstrated what not to do when mentoring others. As development is passed on so is how the development occurs.

## CHAPTER V

### CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

My mentors have had a strong influence on me and continue to guide me even through the process of this study. Through this study, I wanted to understand the experiences others had with mentoring relationships. Because of their perceived success, CEOs were the most natural population for me to study. I assumed that because the CEOs achieved leadership positions in large organizations, the CEOs had people who played a significant role in their development throughout life—and they have.

This chapter includes the conclusions of this study based on the experiences of CEOs as mentors and protégés. In addition, I will make recommendations for future practice and research. There were intricate details shared by each CEO that were unique to the individual. Every detail of the experiences could not be written in hundreds of pages; however, the themes that emerged are the core of what the CEOs have shared with me and truly describe the essence of their experiences. Several people have wondered if I would be able to connect with these men who lead large organizations. I believe I have made a connection—listening to them tell about their role models and describing those that have shown them the way. Some shared more than others did, and some even cried.

I have often considered the influence my mentors have had on my life and helping me to get where I am today. Because of my relationships, I wanted to better understand mentoring relationships and think that by studying others I have gotten closer. The excitement of meeting CEOs and learning more about their experiences has

been very rewarding. In fact, it is easy to take myself back to that first interview with me in my black pantsuit, stepping in the elevator, going to the 65<sup>th</sup> floor of a magnificent building, and walking into a glass arena where one man makes multi-million dollar decisions everyday. Me, sitting there with some inner calm, knowing he has something to share and hoping I can reach in and find it. Amazingly, the CEOs all made the experience easy. Each one welcomed me and spared minutes from their busy lives to talk about their past and their way of developing the future. Because of the CEOs' positions they are isolated (Sztucinski, 2001) and some, I think, had no one else to talk to so I was a fresh breath of air that listened to them when there was no one else. Others are just happy to help someone who is growing into their own.

An hour, sometimes more, was spent with me primarily listening to the stories of how the CEOs got where they are and hearing about those who helped the CEOs get to the top of the organizations. Several CEOs had a mentor who had been with them for years, through thick and thin, shining the light on their paths. For some the mentor was only in their life for a brief time while the lessons taught by the mentor lasted a lifetime. Regardless of the length of the relationship, each mentor left something that made these men who they are.

As both mentor and protégé, the core of the mentoring relationships was the relational elements. Kram's (1988) work on the functions of mentoring has been foundational in the current literature on mentoring relationships. The current study supports Kram in that the CEOs experiences as protégés demonstrated the various roles in mentoring functions identified by Kram. In a variety of experiences, the CEOs shared

how their mentor(s) provided counseling, coaching, friendship, and others. However, this study discovered something deeper. There are relational elements at the core of the relationships. From the mentoring functions, values, attributes, and actions were evident. In addition, there was a special “connection” made between only a few mentors and protégés, which provided an enhanced development for both. The connecting or “clicking” is difficult to articulate, but it is seen in the interactions, the outcomes, and effectiveness of the relationships. These few relationships contained all the relational elements creating an even stronger bond.

### My Understanding

My understanding of CEOs experiences as a mentor and protégé have lead me to four primary realizations about the experiences of the CEOs in this study. The realizations are not to be compared with the conclusions of the study; instead, the realizations are overarching understandings of the twelve experiences shared by the CEOs in this study. These realizations can influence HRD scholars and practitioners in the development of human capital in organizations today. My understandings of the CEOs in this study include:

- All twelve of the CEOs have mentors;
- Individual development matters;
- Development occurs over time; and
- Emotion and relational elements are important elements in human development.

The CEOs in this study all have mentors. Each person was able to identify the people who had influenced them and their development. The CEOs recalled events and

lessons learned with immediacy and emotion. The lessons shared have had a long-term impact and are still being used today in the lives of the CEOs. Often when working with others, the CEOs refer to the lessons from their mentors and use the ideals from the lessons to inform their decisions. Recognizing that successful people have others in their lives that have helped them can be beneficial as young professionals begin their journey.

Individual development matters. Organizations often see group and team training as the most efficient way to develop employees. By lumping a large number of people together in workshops and training sessions HRD professionals can be effective in some situations, but this study concludes that for these CEOs, individual development matters. A significant portion of the CEOs' development was conducted individually by individuals. When asked how they got where they are today, not one mentioned a workshop or presentation. Instead, they mentioned individuals who had worked with them to become better professionals.

For the CEOs in this study, their development occurred over time. No one person or one event made the CEOs who they are, instead it took several relationships and a lifetime to help them develop the knowledge, skills, and abilities they use today in their current positions. With each phase of their professions, CEOs had a mentor helping them become stronger, helping them make good decisions, showing them the path to being better in whatever position they had. Even in the top position of organizations, these men have people who they look to for stable, sound advice.

People have emotions, and these emotions and relational elements are the glue that make mentoring relationships effective and make relationships work. Organizations



today focus on performance (Cummings & Worley, 2001), instead of embracing the emotions and relational elements shared by the individuals in the organization.

From these understandings, I will now transition to specific conclusions and recommendations. The understandings are informed by the conclusions. However, the conclusions are more specific and directly relate to the findings of the study.

### Conclusions and Implications

The study concludes with those things that I have learned. Many of the conclusions are forthright and evident in all the experiences shared; other conclusions are less obvious and will require further research. In the following section, I outline the conclusions of this study and provide implications where appropriate. Recommendations for future research are discussed below.

Kram's (1985) functions do occur in mentoring relationships. This study provides very strong support for the psychosocial and career development functions determined by Kram in her seminal research. The CEOs often used Kram's exact words when describing their experiences as protégés. I have not identified any research that has tried to validate Kram's research, and although that was not the initial purpose of this study, the findings are such that Kram's work is evident throughout the experiences shared.

CEOs have mentors who have been influential in their development. Most corporate presidents have had mentors who were vital to their success (Jennings, 1971). This is true. Each CEO easily identified key individuals who played a significant role in helping the CEOs get to the top.

Mentoring relationships develop professionals at all levels of an organization and throughout a person's careers. As the CEOs described the progression of their careers, mentors were an influence at every level. The CEOs did not need the same guidance at every level so different functions were provided as the developmental needs changed. A few of the CEOs' mentors lasted through many stages of their career, while some of the mentors only lasted for a short while.

Informal mentoring relationships are the natural ground for relational elements to grow. Each of the CEOs experiences as protégés were through informal mentoring relationships. Relational elements are woven throughout mentoring relationships. Every experience shared by the CEOs included a combination of relational elements. Different relational elements were seen in the various roles that occur in mentoring functions. Many relationships can be developmental, but in order to have a mentoring relationship there must be a stronger bond between the mentor and protégé. This bond creates an opportunity for a more comprehensive developmental relationship.

I think the relational elements cannot be forced in a formal mentoring program, however, that does not mean that formal mentoring programs are not effective. Formal mentoring programs would be more effective if the relationships were outcome driven instead of trying to emulate informal mentoring relationships. No one can replicate or even create the relational elements that emerge in informal relationships. The formal mentoring programs, however, can be successful if the purpose is clear to both the identified mentor and protégé and the needs of the relationship are determined prior to the meeting. In a few cases, it is possible the formal mentoring program will actually

develop into a long-term informal mentoring relationship, but it cannot be forced. The culture of the organization and the value put on people will help lay a foundation where relational elements can develop.

CEOs learn how to mentor from their mentors; however, this does not always mean they mentor the way in which they were mentored. Just as the CEOs who were in positive relationships learned how to mentor positively, the CEOs who did not have a positive experience learned what not to do in a mentoring relationship. This is counter to Kram and Isabella's (1985) study, which determined that it is better to have no mentor than to have a negative mentoring relationship.

The CEOs in the current study almost uniformly were unable to self report on their experiences as a mentor. A person does not always recognize when someone identifies them as a mentor. Many times people do not recognize the influence they have over others. This may explain why there is limited research on mentors. Wanberg et al. (2003) found there is scant evidence available to determine if mentoring relationships provide outcomes for the mentors similar the outcomes for the protégé. The CEOs as mentors hoped they had developed others, but it was difficult for them to give specific examples.

CEOs did not find their mentors, rather the mentors found them. This dynamic selection, which occurs through the mentor's observation of performance and through the lens of values, attributes, and actions, brought about a complex and multi-dimensional, developmental relationship resulting in what appears to be a lifetime bond.

This bond is formed through relational elements and results in mutual learning and development.

Mentoring relationships teach powerful, enduring lessons. Up to as long as 40 years later, these CEOs were able to share their experiences as protégés with immediate recall and exact detail. The CEOs refer to the lessons, which are applied everyday in all aspects of their life, continuing to hope their mentors are proud.

CEOs are normal and very much real, unlike the CEOs described in *Studying Elites Using Qualitative Methods* (Hertz & Imber, 1995). I found them to be accessible and willing to help. Each one wanted to make sure my study was successful. We often discussed family and personal information, helping me to better understand them as a person. They answered every question I asked with sincerity and emotion—sometimes anger and sometimes with tears. One CEO even followed up with a note of thanks and good wishes. I am a better person for having spent time with each of them.

Although not related to my original research questions, I found it interesting that several CEOs, especially those that founded their organization, could not separate themselves from their company. It is as if they are one with their organization and feel completely responsible for the company's employees. Running an organization is a heavy burden and professionals considering that role should be aware of its pressures. The above items represent the lessons I have learned to this point.

#### Recommendations for Future Research

The more I discovered the more I want to know. With each new discovery or deeper understanding of mentoring relationships, came a more intense desire to ask more

questions and dig deeper into what is unknown. My proposal set the guidelines for a study that would help better understand the experiences of the CEO as both mentor and protégé. I believe it did fulfill its purpose, but it also has brought attention to areas where more research must be conducted. Before laying out the specific recommendations, I want to provide an overview of an area that has brought some concern to how mentoring is used and where more research must be focused.

All twelve CEOs for this study were white males. This is representative of the current population of CEOs in the United States, however, are mentoring relationships playing a role in why there are not more women and minorities at the top of organizations? Mentors often look for individuals with the same values and mindsets to further develop. Although, two of the CEOs in this study identified women who they had mentored, and one was an African American women. Is it a conscious effort on behalf of the mentor; should it be? Although there is some research on minorities and mentoring, is enough focus being given to the subject? More research should be conducted to better determine how mentoring plays a role in developing women and minorities.

The next concern deals with class and if mentoring relationships could have an influence on helping those from lower socio-economic levels reach a higher status. Most of the CEOs in the study had meager upbringings and three actual had very little financial resources when starting out. Each CEO was given an opportunity to advance and prove their potential. Many of these opportunities came from the CEOs' mentors. There is little available research on mentoring relationships and socioeconomic levels (Wanberg, et al. (2003). Future research should be conducted to better understand how

mentoring relationships could break the barriers that socioeconomic status have created, especially those individuals in the lower class.

The topics of race, class, and gender are important to the success of organizations and the individuals in the organizations. Mentoring relationships can provide the necessary development to provide individuals who are striving to reach new levels in organizations the opportunity to do so. Research should be conducted to determine if formal mentoring relationships could provide opportunities to develop people and provide opportunities to those individuals of lower socioeconomic status, female, and minorities. Perhaps by developing a formal mentoring program focused specific individuals will provide the individuals (protégés) with opportunities to advance in the organization.

This study has forced me to examine race, class, and gender, all of which are influenced by values, experiences, goals, and willingness to assume risk. The following recommendations provide for a more fundamental understanding of mentoring relationships.

1. A follow up study should be conducted that would allow each CEO to identify one or two key individuals whom the CEOs thought they had helped.

Interviewing the identified individuals and the CEOs in matched sets, about the experiences of the relationships would help determine the CEOs' role as a mentor.

2. Additional research should be conducted to further identify relational elements in mentoring relationships.

3. A study should be conducted to better understand the process through which developmental relationships become a mentoring relationship.
4. Research should be conducted to understand relational elements in the context of mentoring relationships, specifically in formal mentoring programs.
5. Research should be conducted to better understand the impact of negative mentoring relationships on protégé outcomes.
6. A study should be conducted to better understand the special bond that can occur between mentor and protégé.
7. The long-term effects of mentoring relationships should be the focus of continued research.
8. A study should be conducted to determine if organizations with mentoring programs that focus on results and outcomes fulfill the needs of organizations.

#### Recommendations for Practice

Research without application is only partially effective. By utilizing what has been learned in past research, HRD professionals can enhance the learning and performance of individuals in the organizations with which they work. Below are some recommendations for practice.

1. Corporations and CEOs should use mentoring as a tool for succession (not necessarily a formalized mentoring program).
2. Organizations should realize the influence mentors have and utilize the influence for positive gains to set the culture of the organization.

3. Organizations should utilize the human capital of more advanced individuals to help develop new and junior level employees.
4. Organizations should create a culture where mentoring relationships can occur.

### Epilogue

It is hard to believe this journey is almost over. I have spent many a day with this study and the CEOs, listening to our conversations, reading the transcripts, and sharing the lessons I learned. I even took one transcript to a meeting where I was the keynote speaker and shared insight from the CEO (I gave him the credit, of course). I have learned lifelong lessons and believe in mentoring relationships more than ever. I also believe this experience has helped me understand that nothing is out of my reach when there are people helping me along the way. I will miss these CEOs; we have become close through my analysis—I think I actually know these guys. Moving on is bittersweet. Maybe I will go now and join their ranks and really experience things from the top or maybe I will raise children and experience mentoring like Ben described, “Mentoring is much like the relationship between a parent and a child. It is just something you do, it will never be returned to you, but you can only hope that it is passed on.” Either way, this experience has enriched my life, and I will continue to grow from it.



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APPENDIX A  
INFORMED CONSENT FORM

## Chief Executive Officers: From Protégé to Mentor

### Consent Form

I understand that I am being asked to participate in a research study on mentoring relationships. This study is being conducted by Manda H. Rosser and will be the subject of her Ph.D. dissertation at Texas A&M University. I understand that I am one of 10 Chief Executive Officers (CEO) to be interviewed regarding my experience as both a mentor and a protégé. I understand these interviews will be tape recorded, transcribed verbatim, and analyzed. Since verbatim transcripts are critical to the methodology, I understand that refusal to be tape-recorded will be taken as a refusal to participate in the study.

I understand the purpose of this study is to better understand mentoring relationships through the experiences of the CEO as both mentor and protégé and the findings of this study will benefit the field of Human Resource Development in the training of promising employees.

I understand Manda obtained my name through a mutual contact. I understand the first interview will take place between December 1<sup>st</sup> and May 31<sup>st</sup> of 2004 and will last approximately an hour long. I understand that a follow up interview will occur early next year and will last only 30 minutes. I understand that I may choose where my interviews will take place.

I understand that I may refuse to participate in this study without any consequences. If I agree to be interviewed, I may refuse to answer any questions or discuss any particular subject that makes me feel uncomfortable. I understand, too, that if I say something in the interview I later wish I had not said, I can have Manda erase it. I understand that I will have the opportunity to review the transcript and can delete any information I wish to have disregarded and Manda will omit it from any copies she has of the interview.

I understand there are no risks involved in the study. The only inconvenience will be the time I spend in the interviews. I understand there are no personal benefits from the study.

I understand all records will be held confidentially and that my identity will remain anonymous. No one but Manda will have access to the tape recordings and only Manda and the five members of her Advisory Committee will have access to the transcripts made from them. In Manda's working documents, in her dissertation, and in any subsequent publication of the study, my real name will not be used. The names of any persons I discuss during the interview and my company's name will be changed. However, anything I say during the interviews may be reproduced word for word. I understand that confidentiality is a top priority to Manda.



I understand that Manda will keep the tapes of my interviews indefinitely, stored securely in her home. I may, however, ask her to destroy the tapes at any time.

I understand that if I have questions about this study I may contact Manda or the chairperson of her committee, Dr. Toby Egan, whose contact information is listed below.

I understand that this research study has been reviewed and approved by the Institutional Review Board – Human Subjects in Research, Texas A&M University. For research-related problems or questions regarding subjects' rights, I can contact the Institutional Review Board through Dr. Michael W. Buckley, Director of Research Compliance, Office of Vice President for Research at (979) 845-8585 ([mwbuckley@tamu.edu](mailto:mwbuckley@tamu.edu)).

I have read and understand the explanation provided to me. I have had all my questions answered to my satisfaction, and I voluntarily agree to participate in the study.

I have been given a copy of this consent form.

---

Signature of participant

Date

---

Signature of principal investigator

Date

Principal investigator:  
Committee:  
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APPENDIX B

COVER LETTER MAILED BY MUTUAL CONTACT

October 28, 2003

The first purpose of this letter is to introduce Manda Rosser as a doctoral candidate in the Human Resource Development Program at Texas A&M University. The second purpose is to briefly verify for you the legitimacy and purpose of the research study that Manda is conducting and invite you to take part in her doctoral work.

Manda is looking for approximately 10-12 chief executive officers (CEO)/presidents who are currently overseeing large organizations. The title of her study is "Chief Executive Officers: From Protégé to Mentor." Manda wants to better understand the experiences of CEOs as mentors and protégés in order to improve the use of mentoring relationships as a development tool. My esteem for you and confidence in her potential are the principal justifications of this request.

Your participation in this study will be completely voluntary. If you do agree to take part you will first be interviewed by Manda at a time and place of your choosing. The interview will last 60 minutes. The second phase will be a follow up phone/e-mail interview and will take 15 minutes. Manda would like to have the first round of interviews sometime before the end of February. The follow up will be scheduled for March.

We anticipate learning a great deal from Manda's study, and I would appreciate any consideration you might give to participating. Please expect a phone call from Manda in the next few days.

Sincerely,

Edmond S. Solymosy

## APPENDIX C

### LETTER INVITING CEOs TO PARTICIPATE

MANDA H. ROSSER

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November 24, 2003

Dear Potential Participant:

Let me start by saying your consideration to participate in my research study is greatly appreciated. I am currently working full time at Texas A&M University as the Director of the Public Policy Internship Program. My job is to send students to Washington, DC and to Austin, TX to work in public service. The other half of my time is spent as a full time graduate student studying Human Resource Development (HRD). I have reached the dissertation stage and need your help in completing this research project.

As Jarrell Gibbs mentioned I am studying the experiences you have had or are having as a mentor and as a protégé. The topic of mentoring relationships has been a focus since my first doctoral class. We were studying career development, and I ran across a research article on mentoring relationships. My first thought was, "You can study mentoring relationships?" My next thought was "WOW! – This is what I want to do." Several people have been influential in helping me get to where I am today. As well, I work with young adults who need me to be a strong mentor for them. By visiting with you I hope to better understand both sides of these relationships.

I would like to set up a face to face interview sometime in early December or January at a time and place that is convenient with you. Then, early next year there will be a brief follow up to clarify and ask follow up questions. This second discussion can occur on the phone or by e-mail. Your participation will be anonymous. I will not identify you or your company in the research findings.

Understanding the role of mentoring in your success and learning how you are helping develop others will benefit me and the field of HRD. Once the study is complete I would be happy to share the results with you. Possibly the findings will be something you can use to benefit your organization. I appreciate your consideration for participation in the study. If you have any questions please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

Manda H. Rosser  
Doctoral Candidate  
Texas A&M University

## APPENDIX D

### EXAMPLE OF SIGNIFICANT STATEMENTS AND FORMULATED MEANINGS

George

| Significant Statements   | Formulated Meanings  | Functions                              |
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| I graduated top five in my class in artillery school, and I thought I was a pretty good...and thought I sort of had the...and he pulled me off one day after, and he was not my commanding officer, I eventually worked for him, but at that time I was not, and he pulled me off one day and said, "I need to talk to you." And I said, "Yes sir." He said, "Come see me tomorrow. You know you have a lot of potential. That is what it is potential, you are not there yet. You need to understand that you are not an instant general officer." And I got to thinking about that, because he talked some pretty harsh words about, about you know, you just sat down, and you do not think that you are going to make it tomorrow, and I thought, you know, that guy did not have to do that. It was not his job, and he was not my commanding officer, but I have never forgotten that he took an interest in something that he could see that maybe he did not take the edge off, because I could do so much better if I changed some of my characteristics. Probably, he did not use these words, but probably not be so arrogant, so cocky. That is one guy. Um, in that same unit, this is probably why I stayed in the service. I never had any intention of staying in the service. | Life lessons:<br><br>My first mentor humbled me – really made me recognize who am. He did not have to do that, he took a personal interest in me.<br><br>Self reflection and understanding is important                        | Protection<br><br>Counsel              |
| He was a commander that was commanding our unit. He took an interest in about three of us that were second lieutenants. There were three of us that got over there at about the same time, and he was a super guy in that captains and majors worked for him, but he took an interest in these three second lieutenants, and that impressed me that he would take such an interest in us. We had two key job openings in second lieutenants, and there were three of us, and he agonized, and you could see the agony. He agonized a lot over which two of the three were going to get these two jobs. You know, he did not have to show that, but he did, and it was very apparent to the three of us that he was really struggling, and it turned out that two of us got the job, and one of them  | My 2 <sup>nd</sup> mentor also gave me personal attention. He helped me to realize that he was real, and we had a human connection. He cared about my future and well being.<br><br>He recognized my potential which was a big | Sponsor<br><br>Exposure and Visibility |

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| made brigadier general later on. He went to West Point, and the other one went to go play football, army football, and finally got out and went into coaching, but you never know if the mix would have been different, how it would have all worked out. It is another one of those...So, he was interested...Anyway, he took a lot of interest, that was the other guy.   | encouragement to me. I did not want to let him down.  |  |
| There was a third guy, a person that was a lieutenant colonel when I was a captain in North Carolina, he was an older lieutenant colonel close to retirement. He sort of took an interest. I commanded a headquarters...for him, and worked with him. The commander was a colonel...And this is my second command, and he took a real interest in me and my career. In this case, he was my boss, but...  | Again, my 3 <sup>rd</sup> mentor took a personal interest in me and helped me. He supported me and gave me good advice  | Confirmation<br><br>Coach                            |
| And then the last one was a full colonel, and I was his operations officer, and he was a strange guy. He taught me a lot, but when I first met him, I worked with him not for him, and actually I was on staff higher than he was. I was lower in rank, but higher on staff, and boy he was tough to deal with, but when you went to work for him, he provided a big umbrella to let you succeed and fail, and he kept people off your back, and he took all of the heat, and let you do your job, and what was strange about the whole thing was that, he was big in artillery command...and he asked me to come down and be his operations officer, which shocked me, because we had knocked heads all of the time, when I was higher on staff than he was, and I said, "You have got to be kidding." But he taught me that, one thing is that he saw disagreement as a positive not as a negative. Because, you know, we did not always agree, and that is the reason that we knocked heads. You know, I had a job to do, and he did not want to give troops that would do it, and so we had to get the thing done, and so I stood up and butted heads with him, and I said "No." because I had to get the job done, and he had the troops, and there were only three places that you could go in Fort Hood to get them, and he was one of the three. So, he had to do his fair share, but I was really shocked when he taught me a lot. The last one in the service, he was difficult to get along with unless you worked for | My 4 <sup>th</sup> mentor had high expectations, and I didn't want to let him down. I respected him and appreciated his willingness to support and protect me.<br><br>I didn't understand him until I got closer to him. We had a mutual admiration. He gave me responsibilities, and I wanted to do things right.<br><br>He took a personal interest in me and gave me the confidence to do more things. | Protection<br>Challenging<br>Tasks<br><br>Role Model |



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| him. When you worked for him, he was an easy guy to get along with, because you were the only ones that he had to answer to. Everybody else he defended you. Even though you may be wrong, he protected you. So, you got the sense that you could fail, and it was ok, because it was just between the two of you. He was going to make sure that you knew you failed, but nobody else got involved.  |   |                   |
| Nelson was one, obviously, because Nelson and I grew pretty close, pretty quick. We are about the same age. I could tell Nelson some things that you would not tell anyone, not that you could, that you would, that is the key. A lot of other people could, but they would not, because Nelson would challenge you, and they did not like to take the heat...Nelson is the perfect gentleman, but he is not the easiest guy to work for, primarily because he is a lawyer by background, by training. Lawyers question people, and Nelson is intelligent. He is probably one of the more intelligent people I have ever met. I mean, he is brilliant. He is really intelligent. He has got a mind that keeps thousands of facts, and he can recall them. I cannot do that. I have got to get down to the basics and forget about all of the minutia, but he can handle all of the minutia. So, he asks you all types of questions. He is the type of guy that will keep asking you all types of questions until he gets to the one that you cannot answer. He just keeps asking, asking and asking. No matter how many answers you have, it is not enough. The reason it is not, he is not trying to intimidate you or anything, he likes details, and he can handle details. Most people cannot do that, and so that is one that you get frustrated, because you do not have all of the answers, but he won't get frustrated. The other one is that, because he is a lawyer he questions, and lawyers are sort of in-your-face type of people, and when they question you, you have to defend, and that is the way lawyers do their business, and when he is the boss, that is uncomfortable, and so a lot of people would not stand up and either say "That is not right, or this is the way I think it should be done, and you cannot think that if you want to, but here is | <p>Nelson and I have a relationship based on trust and communication. He is so smart, and I admire him.</p> <p>I don't want to let him down.</p> <p>He may disagree with me, but he listens and once he understands my perspective and when he sees it is ok, he helps me get the job done.</p> | Challenging Tasks |

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| why I think it, da da da da da.” I would, and so we got real close. So Nelson was, I was Nelson’s technical...and he hired me.   |  |  |
| The other guy, actually it was Kim’s father, Warren who worked with our company. And Warren was a hard guy to work for some people say. He was blusterous, and people would say about Warren, “If there was not a fire going on, he would start one just so that he could put it out, type of guy.” You could hear him coming down the hall, because he walked determined, but Warren took an interest in my career, and I worked for Warren for a brief period of time, and we worked real well together, and I never had any problems with Warren. The other guy was a guy who I was replacing who had a reputation for being really...a pain in the rear. He was an engineer’s engineer, and it was not engineered right. I mean he had his way of doing things, and that was the right way of doing things, and I went over to Fort Worth, and he was going to retire, and went over to Fort Worth and spent a year working for him, and then replaced him. That was one of the nicest ten months that I ever spent. He was absolutely excellent in getting me up-to-speed to replace him. | <p>I recognize that Warren was not perfect, but he has some strengths that I can learn from.</p> <p>I appreciated his willingness to share with me and help make sure I succeed. He encouraged and supported me.</p> | Role Model<br>Coach<br>Protection<br>Sponsor |
| He could have been like... “I know that I am leaving. I know that I am getting ready to be replaced, but I am still resentful.” He never was. He let me run my business, and then he encouraged me and took me around town. He did everything that you would probably want a person to do for you as they are leaving, and his reputation was terrible. I mean, in the company, he just was not a people person. He was an engineer. He was the executive vice president and general manager of the old companies that we turned into a division. So, in the old days he would have been a company CEO, but now it became a division so, a division general manager. So, he would have been the executive vice president general manager.  | I respected him and trusted his advice   | Exposure and<br>Visibility                   |
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| On being a mentor   |   |   |
| <p>Yeah, there is a, one of the finest compliments I have ever had, there was a guy named Scott, and Scott about two years after, two or three years after the business school was nice enough to make distinguished graduate alumni. Scott became a distinguished graduate alumni. I am the class of '60 and Scott is the class of '80, but in his acceptance speech, he said that the two people who started my career, he finally moved up at the company, was Nelson, and he owed a lot to where he was today to his beginning, because a couple of guys took an interest in him, and he worked directly for me, and it gave me a lot of satisfaction that Scott thought that we had spent some extra time showing a bright young man some...Um, I do not know, you find, I look for people who have high moral values and who...are dedicated and who may not...necessarily see where to go on their own, and you try to help them...through this maze of corporate life. I want to say bureaucracy, but that is not the right word. It is really, in a big corporation, it is really just a big corporation. And so I look for people who are very, very capable, who have really good personal characteristics, but were not open and advertent enough to do it, and there are a lot of people, you know who do not need any help. I mean they do not need any help getting through the corporate phase...They may need help in other ways, but they do not need help in that way, and so there have been several along the way that I have taken a particular interest in, and the other people who I take a particular interest in are those who...being an outsider, there were a lot of people who did not see me as the logical choice to make as the one to take this job, particularly...outside of finance. I was an operations v.p., before I became the d.v.p. and general manager...and general manager of electric system. I had never been in an electric system. I became a chief financial officer, but I was not a CPA, and a lot of CPAs work for you, so you ought to be a CPA, and in operations, you ought to be an engineer, and I was not an engineer. I sort of took people who it was obvious that that would bother on as a challenge to gain their...respect. So, they became in many cases,</p> | <p>I am honored that others would think I have helped them. I have taken an interest in some and am proud of what they have done.</p> <p>I look for people with values and dedication. Sometimes even the "green" or naive ones. I recognize their potential and what they are capable of. I look for good people. When "outsiders" come along I really relate to them and want to help them.</p> <p>I challenge them and push them to do better.</p> | <p>Guidance/coach<br/>Confirmation</p> <p>Sponsor</p> |

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| <p>pretty close, because I spent a lot of time with them. So, they began to understand that it is not just what you know, it is how you do it.</p>   |   |                                |
| <p>Formal mentoring program:</p> <p>There is a positive and a negative. The positive is that you get to meet bright people, and they get a real taste of how executives operate, and you get to know someone. So, you know they are human, because when you get up, when you get to be an officer, somehow people think that you just were always an officer. You just grew there, you know, you had never been somewhere else. And when you get to be senior officer in corporate management, they think you were born almost at that level. I mean, they do not think you are human. The same thing with general officers in the army. He does not understand or she does not understand...because we all started somewhere. So, they get to see that corporate officers are human, and there is a human aspect, and they get to see the interface of how it works. It is not just somebody sitting on high saying they have got people they consult with and people they talk to and people they hear, and that is good education, and the personal relationships, and so that is the positive. The negative is I think it builds, even though you say it and you say it and you say it, "This is not the guarantee to your next promotion." It does build...it can build unrealistic expectations. So, it can cause some frustration. You know "I have learned all this, but I am still down here, and they are up here, and now I know all of this knowledge, and now I still have to get there." And young people today, and I think it is changing, but you take the '80s and '90s, and everything was instant. You know, "I want to be there tomorrow or today would be better than tomorrow. Certainly not next year and certainly not in the next five to ten years." And so I think that is the negative, and do not get me wrong. I think that the positives outweigh the negatives, so I am in favor of interning programs, but the best program I think that we have was sort of group mentoring rather than one-on-one. Um, these</p> | <p>I want to get to know someone. Mentoring helps to break down the barriers and to help others recognize that we are all human.</p> <p>I hope people appreciate their mentors</p> <p>It takes time and work.</p> <p>Negative:<br/>Can give the protégé false hope.</p> | <p>Exposure and Visibility</p> |

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| <p>people volunteered. They did it outside the work hours, Saturday, in the evenings.</p> <p>And there was a leader that was the mentor of the group hired as a manager of some sort, and all of these were not, and then they would bring in people that would just have a session, and this did a couple of things. It broadened their, because you put, you did not put all engineers together. You put all different kinds of people in there. So, it broadened their perspectives...and it let them see a manager, because he was with them or she was with them all of the time. So they got a taste of this human element of somebody that was two or three levels higher than they were, and they could in a non-threatening environment. When you touch base, you get to know, at least to some more intimate degree, some of the leadership of the corporation. The expectations of those folks when they left was not as great, but I think that the appreciation was as good. Now, you may get a different viewpoint from them. I do not know, but that is the way that I saw it.</p> <p>P1: How many, how big was the group, just rough estimate?</p> <p>P2: Ten to fifteen...</p> |   |  |
| <p>I need to mention one other lady. In people that influenced me...She was in HR mentoring stuff. That was her job, and her job was to train me. I met her in Fort Worth. When I first went over to Fort Worth, she was in Fort Worth. So, I knew her for a little over half of my career with the company, and she took it upon herself to, I was probably, when I first met her, I was already three or four levels above her in the corporate pecking order. And she let me know that that was going to be her job, after a while, not immediately anyway. Yeah, so you do not have to do it from top-down. There is a leadership, which I think is called the fifth discipline. Yeah, I think that is it. I have read that book, but I am not sure if that is it or not. Maybe is it the Fifth Level...but there is a school of thought now about leadership of kingmakers rather than kings. It is harder to be second than it is to be first. People have made a great career of being presidents, but never being CEOs. They are making sure that the CEO is good.</p>  | <p>The level of the organization doesn't matter. One of my mentors really inspired me. Her confidence really encouraged me.</p> |  |

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| Well, that is a form of mentoring.  |   |                                    |
| <p>I will tell you a story...We had a real tough negotiation...and three of us, three of us were given this job of making these negotiations succeed, and we finally concluded that the only way that we could succeed was a certain way. This was the only way to go. This was not the way that Nelson has envisioned...As a matter of fact he said, "It is not going to happen that way. We are not going to do that." And we spent a lot of time...and we all finally agreed that this was the only way that it could happen. There was not other...No one, you cannot solve all of the problems of interest unless it happens this way simply because outside forces will not allow it, because you cannot satisfy all four parties, us and three others. So, and we had gotten pretty close to Nelson, because this was his pet project, and he was responsible for trying to get this done, and he had picked out the three of us to do it, and finally we got him to...And he got up and started to leave, and I said, "Excuse me. Sit down...You cannot walk out. It is too important. Sit down, and let us finish. Then you can say, "No." If you want to, but you are not going anywhere." And he looked at me and he sat back down. I say that only to, not against Nelson, but to say that there are different ways that you can mentor. You do not have to be top-down. Everybody can teach somebody something. Well, it is just a fact.</p> <p>I mean the other two had not worked, not only are we close in age, but they had not worked that closely. They would have been afraid of how he would react, and I knew how he would react. That it would shock him, and he would sit back down. Yeah, it was the shock factor of...challenging him right to his face and saying, "Sit down!" They would have had no idea of how he would react, and I knew how he was going to react. Well, eventually it was the greatest thing that ever happened, but with Nelson, you have to understand, until it is his idea, it is not going to happen, and a lot of people did not understand that as well. He changed his mind, but he changed his mind when it</p> | <p>Nelson and I trust each other. We are honest and open with each other. He has confidence in me and I have confidence in him. The relationship can be reciprocal where the mentor learns from the protégé and the protégé learns from the mentor.</p> <p>I really knew my mentor. I never looked for anything in return from him.</p> | <p>Challenge</p> <p>Friendship</p> |

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| <p>became his idea. That is ok. You see the problem with getting all tied up with, “Wait a minute, that was my idea.” When it does not make any difference. As long as it happens. That is what makes any difference. So, when he understood that that was the only way that it could happen. Then it became his idea. When it became his idea, it happened, and that was the greatest thing since...and we were heroes when for a while we were goats.</p>  |  |                                     |
| <p>Sure...At what point did your relationship become a friendship with Nelson?<br/> P2: Um, I do not know. I am not sure I can answer that question.<br/> P1: Would you consider him a friend now, though?<br/> P2: Oh yeah...clearly...Oh yeah, really great friends, and friends can tell each other how it is, where business associates may not be able to. I mean he is my biggest fan and biggest critic. And I am his biggest fan and biggest critic, too.</p>  | <p>Critic and supporter<br/> Two ways</p>  |                                     |
| <p>I am sort of an oxymoron, and I will explain that in a minute, and I have dealt with this all of my life. I mean, I have known about this ever since I was a young lieutenant, and I do not know why, but I know it is there, because everybody has told me throughout all of my careers. I am first seen as hard until you get to know me, and I have dealt with that for forty three years. It bothers me, but I have never known how to overcome it. I mean, people have told me that forever. You know, from the outside...and maybe it is like this guy who was a colonel that I worked for, and we butted heads until I worked for him, and then I found a different side of him that was really neat to work for. Maybe I am like him, and that is what I mean by an oxymoron. If you are from the outside, if you do not have any close contact with me, I am seen as pretty callous and hard, but people who get to know me say to those people, “You do not understand.” the people that see me like that do not tell me what they see. Only those who are close enough to tell me.</p> | <p>Self reflection –<br/> understanding who I am<br/> is important I think once<br/> I connect with people<br/> they know I am a nice<br/> person.</p> | <p>Acceptance<br/> Confirmation</p> |

## VITA

Candidate: Manda Hays Rosser

Address: 104 Lee Ave.  
College Station, TX 77840

Degree: Doctor of Philosophy

Major Subject: Education Human Resource Development

Thesis Title: Chief Executive Officers: From Mentor to Protégé

Education: Kress High School, Kress, Texas 1994

Bachelor of Science, Agricultural Development  
Texas A&M University, 1997

Master of Science, Agricultural Education  
Texas A&M University, 1999

Professional Background: Program Coordinator, Public Policy Internship Program  
Office of the Associate Provost of Academic Services  
Texas A&M University, 2003-2004

Student Leadership Development Specialist  
Department of Student Activities  
Texas A&M University, 2002-2003

Student Development Coordinator,  
Honors Programs and Academic Scholarships Office  
Texas A&M University, 2000-2002

Visiting Lecturer and Undergraduate Advisor  
Department of Agricultural Education  
Texas A&M University, 1998-2000